LIFE AFTER DEATH

REV. JOHN S. VAUGHAN.

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LIFE AFTER DEATH

OR

REASON AND REVELATION

ON

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

Nihil obstat.

GULIELMUS GILDEA, D.D.

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REASON AND REVELATION

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THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

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A POPULAR TREATISE

BY

REV. JOHN S. VAUGHAN

"The life of every man is as the wellspring of a stream, whose small beginnings are indeed plain to all, but whose ulterior course and destination, as it winds through the expanses of infinite years, only the Omniscient can discern."

—*T. Carlyle*

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Dedication.

To

My seven brothers; viz.:—

To Herbert Vaughan, Cardinal, Archbishop of Westminster,

To Roger Vaughan, (late) Archbishop of Sydney, N.S.W.,

To Kenelm Vaughan, Founder of the Arch Confraternity of Expiation,

To Jerome Vaughan, Founder of St. Benedict's Monastery, N.B.,

To Col. Francis Vaughan, Commander of the Royal Monmouthshire Militia,

To Bernard Vaughan, S.J., Superior of the Jesuit Mission, Manchester,

To Reginald Vaughan, Esq., of Glen Trothy, Abergavenny,

This little volume is dedicated (without leave), as a slight tribute of deep affection.

John S. Vaughan.

Archbishop's House,
Westminster, February, 1895.

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INTRODUCTION.

The following chapters were written, in the first instance, at the invitation of the Right Rev. Mgr. Nugent, for the columns of the *Catholic Times*, and without a thought of their ever receiving a more permanent setting. This, it is to be hoped, will account for their somewhat loose and familiar style and language.

The intention of the Author was to treat of the most intensely interesting subject, in the pleasantest, plainest, and most popular manner at his command, —to speak indeed of some of the profoundest and most momentous problems that agitate the human mind,— yet so to speak, that the simplest and

the least educated might readily understand and follow him.

How far he has succeeded in his task, "Time, the old Justice," that tries all such matters, must decide.

The re-appearance of this little treatise now, in book form, is at the express and earnest wish of a large number of readers, residing in various parts of Great Britain and Ireland. Their kind words, and their many expressions of approval and appreciation, have more than compensated the writer for whatever little trouble he has had. To one and all he tenders his sincerest and most heartfelt thanks. He earnestly hopes that they will help to make the work known, and that they will recommend it to their friends.

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

The object of this work is to state in plain and popular speech, the reasonableness of certain great truths which lie at the foundation of Christian belief. It has had its inspiring motive in the conviction—one which must be to every Christian mind a source of strength, solace, and security—that Christianity claims to rest upon a reasonable basis, and has the highest interest in using, in prizing, in defending the light of human reason with which God has endowed us. Religion means nothing if not the service of God, and God Himself requires that our service shall be "reasonable" (Rom. xii. 1), and that

we shall not only possess, but be ready to give, "a reason for the hope that is in us" (1 Peter iii. 15). This cordial appreciation of the value and claim of human reason is a characteristic of Christianity, upon which we can hardly insist too much in an age of doubt and denial, and, I might add, of philosophical systems which are not uncommonly built upon an initial act of treason to our rational nature.

We hold that it is reasonable to believe in the existence of a Personal and Intelligent God. We hold that we have reasonable evidence for believing that this God has spoken to mankind. And, God being Truth, we hold that it is supremely reasonable to believe whatever He has said to us. God speaking to us is *Revelation*, our believing what He says is *Faith*. Thus

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Faith and Revelation have their groundwork in reason—reason, which tells us that God exists; reason, which assures us of the fact that He has spoken; reason, which inculcates the duty of believing what He says. Never, then, can the Christian disparage human reason, without at the same time disparaging the very ground which underlies the spiritual house he lives in. He can never forget that the light of Reason, not less than that of Revelation, proceeds from Him, the light of whose "countenance is signed upon us" (Ps. iv. 7), and "Who is the Light which enlighteneth every man who cometh into this world" (John i.). The Catholic Church has shown her wisdom in watchfully defending the right and the veracity of human reason

against those who had impugned it. She did so against Luther, who, in teaching that our nature was wholly vitiated and corrupted by the fall, described human reason, the highest part of it, as a "beast," and heaped upon it some of the most vilifying epithets which he could find in his vocabulary of vituperation. She did so against De la Mennais, who sought unwisely to diminish and depreciate the scope of natural reason, with a view to magnify and expand the domain of Faith in the sphere of human judgment. She did so at the Vatican Council, when she vindicated for human reason its sublime function as serving as the natural basis of the truths of revelation. As long as the Catholic Church is the guardian of

Faith, so long must she continue to be the defender of Reason.[1]

When we maintain that the whole edifice of Christian belief has human reason for its groundwork, we do not mean that while resting upon it, it will not rise above it. Still less do we mean that the work of Christian faith is merely a natural, naked intellectual process. Our reason supplies us with reasonable grounds for believing that there is a God—also with reasonable grounds for believing that God has spoken and communicated to us that body of truth, which we call Revelation. In both cases we hold that the evidence is reasonable, viz.,

[1] "If any one shall say that the One True God, our Creator and Lord, cannot be certainly known by the natural light of human reason through His works, let him be anathema."—*Dogmatic Constitution of the Vatican. Canon II., De Revelatione.*

that it possesses such certain guarantees of truthfulness, that we shall be acting reasonably when we believe and accept it. But such evidence, while it claims, will not compel my assent.[1] The evidence is there, and its reasonableness is there; but whether I choose to look into the evidence, the spirit and attitude of mind in which I examine it, and consequently, the measure in which I will reach the sense of its reasonableness and conclusiveness, is simply a matter of my

[1] Intellectual assent is not compelled except in primary and self-evident truths. I cannot help myself believing that 2 + 2 = 4. But I can help myself believing that the sum of the angles of a triangle equal two right angles, because if I choose I need not go into the reasons which establish it. If this be true in the domain of necessary truths, which have their evidence inside of them, how much more so in the domain of positive facts, which have their evidence outside of them? Revelation and the Incarnation belong to the order of facts.

own free will. I may, or I may not. The light of reason, if I use it aright, will put me in possession of reasonable grounds for believing; but it leaves my freedom intact. It is only in proportion as I consent to examine the grounds, and to do so with earnestness and honesty, that the light of reason will make its appeal to my conviction. If I am indifferent, or if I approach the examination with a conscious or unconscious bias to reject, reason will not force the reasonableness of the evidence upon me. I may thus, through no fault of the evidence, remain even sincerely satisfied as to its absence or insufficiency, and be left to my unbelief.

It is at this point—to secure the junction of man's reason on the one hand, with the reasonableness of the

evidence on the other—that we have the intervention of Divine Grace.

God acts upon man's mind and will. He imparts to man a sharing of His own Divine Mind, and to man's will an impulse of His own Divine Will. By this supernatural light and influence man is lovingly led—not coerced, for light and love do not coerce—to see the reasonableness of God's existence, the reasonableness of the evidence of His Revelation, and to gladly assent to the truths which He has revealed to us. Catholic Faith is, therefore, the sharing by man of the mind and heart of God.[1] Thence the peace and unity, the strength and stability, which are the happy heritage of those who possess it.

[1] The Apostle uses a stronger expression when he spoke of those who were thus enriched as being made "partakers of the Divine Nature" (2 Pet. i. 4).

Once we realise that this work of Faith is a communication of the Mind of God with the mind of man, and an ineffable act of condescension of God Who becomes "our Teacher" (Is. lv. 4), while we "become taught of God" (John vi. 45), and once that we realise that it is a loving and intimate mental union between God and the soul, we shall easily perceive that it must postulate certain moral conditions which, in adult man, are indispensable. Whether and how far God will enter into such a union with man will depend on man's free consent—and certainly upon man possessing certain dispositions, without which that union becomes impracticable. These dispositions are not intellectual acumen, nor literary greatness, nor profound learning, nor worldly wisdom. They are of a very different

order. They are humility—the docility which "humbles itself like a little child," sincerity, and the "purity of heart" which "sees God". On the other hand, intellectual pride, however subtle and hidden, the mental prejudices and prepossessions and inordinate attachment to personal views, which are born of it (and which are quite compatible with a large amount of sincerity) are so many obstacles which go to obstruct, if not to bar and to mar that inshedding of the Mind of God into the soul, which we call the grace of Faith.

We are here stating a general law of God's dealings with man. Its application to the individual cases of this or that unbeliever is no part of our province, since it must depend on circumstances which lie mostly in *foro*

conscientiae, and are beyond our ken. Ours is to hope, and to pray, leaving judgment to God, to whom it belongs. For the Christian, it is abundantly enough to rely upon what he has found in God, and on what God has been to him. He has God's testimony both within him and without him. He is profoundly conscious of the reasonableness of the evidence of God's existence,—evidence which to him fills and floods with light the whole universe, while it vibrates in the depths of his own heart,—evidence which gives him the key of the past, the present, and the future, and which supplies the only answers to that irrepressible questioning cry of the human soul, as to the whence, the why, and the whither. He is conscious of the reasonableness of the

evidence that God, as the good Father, has spoken to and instructed mankind. He is conscious of the reasonableness of accepting without doubt or discussion what his God has said to him. Above all, we are conscious that God has been with us in this work of belief, and that it is God Himself, who, by the imparting of His own Divine Mind and Heart, has sealed and sanctified and riveted the assent which our reason has given to the reasonableness of that testimony which the world without and within has presented to us, and who bears witness to His own blessed work within us, by giving to the Christian soul the peace which the world cannot give, and that strength which the world cannot withstand. "*This is our Victory which overcometh the world, our Faith.*" It is this

sweet reasonableness clothing with its radiance all God's Word, and God's Work, that inspires the appeal which this little work makes to the conscience of its readers. If "Life after Death" succeeds in dispelling the mist from even one beclouded soul, or restores strength and courage to even one of the weary wayfarers of life, or gives guidance to even one of the wanderers in the mazes of unbelief,—who will not wish it God speed on its mission of light and usefulness?

J. Canon Moyes.

Archbishop's House,
Westminster, *February*, 1895.

LIFE AFTER DEATH.

CHAPTER I.

Brother, this Planet, I find, is but an inconsiderable sand-grain in the continents of Being: this Planet's poor temporary interests, thy interests and my interests there, when I look fixedly into that eternal Light-Sea, and Flame-Sea with *its* eternal interests, dwindle literally into Nothing.—*T. Carlyle.*

A STORY is told of an infant, born in the depths of a vast mine in America. In that dark, dismal abode beneath the earth, it grew up year after year, without ever once being carried to the surface. It was in no way discontented with its lot, because it had never known any other. It played and ran about, and laughed in those subterranean corridors, illuminated by the lurid glimmer cast by a few oil lamps placed here and there, wholly unsuspicious of the roar and bustle and turmoil of the

great world outside. The external world —the towns and cities and the thousand busy hives of human industry were to it unknown—in fact, it naturally supposed the interior of the great mine, with the labourers and their wives working all day, to be the only world that existed. At last, however, when the child was eight or nine years old, it chanced to find its way to the mouth of the pit. It was at noon in summer, and the sunlight was streaming down in all its golden splendour over hill and valley. The child had never seen anything half so beautiful. For the first time in its brief life, it looked out over wide stretching plains. It contemplated on one side, vast forests and wood-covered mountains, and on the other, the far-off sea, that glowed like molten gold, and stretched itself out till it seemed to blend and lose itself in the over-arching sky, now shimmering in the richest tints of red and purple. The astonished child stood

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like one petrified, and riveted to the spot. It seemed bewildered, and unable to take in the gorgeous scene. The immensities of space, the undreamed-of distances, the gigantic proportions of the earth, seemed to overwhelm his mind and to oppress his senses. At last, following the promptings of nature, he threw himself down flat on his face, and worshipped the Author of all this beauty and magnificence.

In the history of this child[1] we have a beautiful figure of the history of the human race. For thousands of years man lived upon this earth, and was satisfied to contemplate its form and nature, and to sing its praises. Hardly more did he know of the great planetary universe beyond, than the child we have spoken of knew of the woods and seas, and the teeming cities and

[1] Some wiseacre has written to inform me that this story is an impossible one. But surely its truth or falsity in no way affects its value as an illustration. Are the fables of Æsop or of La Fontaine less instructive because not all founded on fact?

emporiums of trade and commerce, that existed beyond the mine in which he dwelt.

To primitive man the earth was practically the whole creation. He never doubted but that it was the very centre of the universe, rooted and established for ever. The sun and moon and stars were but as so many lamps to light it. The earth, according to his ideas, did not itself move, but stood rigid and fixed, while all the great planets and suns danced attendance upon it. Man had no idea of the vastness of the realms of space, stretching out upon every side. He could form no adequate conception of the size and magnificence of the heavenly bodies; so that in those days, the creation spoke to him with nothing like the eloquence with which it speaks to us now. Indeed, until the science of astronomy had advanced, and enormous and complicated telescopes had been invented, and observatories and instruments of precision placed at man's

disposal, and brought into common use, man knew but very little of the dimensions or of the colossal scale of the visible creation.

By help of the refracting and reflecting telescopes, and through the general advance along the whole line of science, we have now come to correct our views. We are no longer living in the mine, but have reached the light of scientific day. We find that the earth, our dwelling place, is not the important planet that was once supposed. So far from being the centre of the universe, the chief among the myriad celestial orbs moving in space, we are compelled to admit that it is a very small and an extremely insignificant object. Compared to the rest of creation it is but a tiny mote, a mere grain of dust, an inappreciable point. We may speak of the sun as "a lamp to illuminate our earth," but we now know that this lamp is considerably more than a million times the

bulk of the earth which it illuminates. So small, in comparison, is the earth, that we might take matter enough from the sun to fashion a thousand, or even ten thousand earths the size of ours, and the sun would seem almost as large, as bright, and as beautiful as before, and its glory hardly diminished. Nay, if the globe of the sun were to be sliced up into a million equal parts, each one of these million parts would be appreciably larger than the bulk of our earth, so inconceivable is its magnitude—yet if the sun and the earth and the whole of our solar system, together with all which it contains, were to be suddenly effaced and utterly obliterated, the effect in the universe at large would merely be that one tiny star, lost in the measureless depths of space, had ceased its twinkling. The myriad host of stars which stud our sky has been elevated into vast importance. "Each one of those stars is itself a mighty sun, actually

rivalling, and in many cases surpassing our own luminary. We thus open up a majestic conception of the vast dimensions of space, and of the dignity and splendour of the myriad globes by which that space is tenanted."[1]

As a living writer has well expressed it: "Of those celestial bodies which gravitate in majestic harmony through infinite space, some are suns first bursting into flame, others are suns well-nigh burnt out. Here are worlds which are the cradles of life; there are worlds which are its tombs—vast, nameless sepulchres, black and frozen, minatory of the end to which our terrestrial home is surely hastening. This earth is but a diminutive islet in the boundless celestial archipelago, which has its centre everywhere and its circumference nowhere: one of the least considerable planets of our vast solar system, which, again, is a mere speck in the illimitable ocean of

[1] *Vide* Ball.

space."[1] To destroy the whole of our earth would produce no more effect upon the universe itself, than the destruction of a single leaf would produce upon a great forest; it would leave no more appreciable gap in the material creation, than would the destruction of a single grain of sand in the immense bed of the ocean.

What a poor, weak and foolish thing is man, in the presence of that great and irresistible Power, Who has spread out the heavens above and around us, and has filled all space with such innumerable and such wonderful worlds! When we issue forth into the night and peer fearfully into those fathomless interstellar depths; when we gaze with reverential admiration at those distant stars, which we know are enormous suns, and yet look but as mere grains of golden splendour, owing to their stupendous and measureless distances, do not feelings of

[1] W. S. Lilly.

reverence and awe steal upon us? Do we not feel inclined, like the child first issuing from the dark mine into gladsome day, to throw ourselves on our faces, and to worship and adore the Lord and Master of all that magnificence, and to break out with the prophet into words of wonder and of praise: The heavens and the earth are full of Thy glory. Yet, they are but the works of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure: they shall all grow old as a garment; and as a vesture Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art always the self-same, and Thy years shall not fail (Ps. ci. 27)? Yet, though the boundless extent, the exceptional beauty, and the perfect order and symmetry and proportion of the material creation, is a stupendous revelation of God; though we see the perfections of the Divine Artist shining, as it were, through His work, and reflected in every part of creation, — yet He is

still more clearly manifested in man himself.

Man is a far more wonderful and a far higher creation than the whole material universe; and he affords a still more incontestable proof of the power and the wisdom and the goodness of God. To look upon that microcosm, man, is to look upon a work divine. His whole being speaks of God, and demands God for its Author. Indeed, it would be far easier to suppose that such a complicated and beautiful piece of machinery as a steam-engine or a chronometer sprang into existence without any exercise of thought or reason, and without any rational artificer to conceive and fashion it, than it would be to suppose that man, with all his parts and organs of body and faculties of mind, could exist without a divine intellect to conceive him, and an omnipotent power to produce him. And, what deserves special attention and considera-

tion is the fact, that—not revelation only, not Scripture nor tradition, nor theological teaching only—but science itself compels us, unless we are to stultify ourselves and to deny the clearest dictates of reason—to admit an all-powerful and an all-wise Creator.

In these days men pin their faith upon science. Science is their teacher, their instructor, their only reliable guide and authority. Men, who, in their pride and self-sufficiency, reject Revelation, denounce the Church, and ridicule the Bible, and indeed all that savours of the supernatural, make science the basis and the source of their belief.

Are we, as Catholics, afraid of Science? Do we reject her teaching? Do we close our eyes to her discoveries or discourage her investigations? No! Most emphatically no! Is not God the Author of nature as of grace? Is not all truth from God, whether physical truth or moral

truth, whether scientific or theological? And can God contradict Himself? Never! Why, then, should we fear the advance of scientific investigation and physical research? We have no cause whatever to fear it. It is an ally; a handmaid of theology. Does science deny God? Quite the contrary. If we go to science, science takes us by the hand, and gently but firmly leads us back to God. Science proclaims the necessity of God, and cannot itself dispense with Him. Thus, to give one particular instance, even that which science teaches us about man, and his history supposes, as a necessary postulate, the existence of a supreme Being.

Indeed, it is impossible to accept the scientific account of the history and development of the material earth on which we dwell, without admitting the necessity of God. To make this clear let me briefly state, at least in outline, what scientific men tell us of the history of our little

planet. We have a fairly accurate idea of the condition and configuration of the earth as it now exists. It is partly rock and soil and partly water. Forests, fields, cities, towns, hamlets, rivers, lakes, seas, mountains and valleys cover it from pole to pole. We might, if left to ourselves, have imagined that it had always been much in the same condition. But science rises, puts on its gown and wig, and proceeds to instruct us. Science may be represented by the geologist, the chemist, and the astronomer. The geologist diligently and carefully investigates the nature of the rocks, the formation of the different layers and strata. He determines, or attempts to determine, how they were formed, and when, and under what circumstances, and so forth. The chemist enters upon an elaborate analysis of matter, and applies all kinds of chemical tests, in order to extract the true process and methods of terrestrial formation. The

astronomer directs his attention to the heavens, and by a process of analogy, determines the history of this earth, by what he sees actually taking place in other and more distant worlds. It would take far too long to describe all their labours, or even to give a bare outline of the contents of the huge volumes and learned tomes they have published. We must be satisfied with some of their more interesting results.

They tell us that the earth we now know so well, was once in a very different condition. They bring forward proofs to show that there was once a time, far distant indeed, when there were no human beings whatever upon the earth. A period —a very remote period, of course—when there was no life of any kind. No animal life; no vegetable life; no muscular movement; no beat of heart or pulse; no sound of hurrying feet, or of flapping wings, or of feathering fins, either in sea, or air, or

forest, or fen. And why? Well, for this most excellent and convincing reason — because the earth was once in a condition in which it could not possibly have supported life. Even to-day, if we descend down deep enough into the interior of the earth, the temperature is found to rise.[1] Long before we approach the centre, we should probably find heat intense enough to liquefy metals. Yet, the earth has been cooling for thousands of years. Well, scientists teach that, at one time, the entire earth was of a considerably higher temperature than even its centre is at present.

Go back, they say, to a sufficiently remote period. Put it as far back as you please—for we may draw without limit on

[1] If the average rate of increase in temperature is continued downwards, it is calculated that a degree of heat, capable of melting rocks, would be reached, at about eighteen or twenty miles beneath our feet. According to this, the thin crust on which we stand is to the whole earth, no more than what the shell is to the egg!

the Bank of Time—let us say, then, 100,000 years, or, if you prefer it, let it be 1,000,000 or 100,000,000 years, and then look at the earth. The earth is, as now, floating in space, but it is as a ball of fire; the heat is so fierce that it glows like a sun. It is in a state of incandescence; it fills the heavens with dazzling splendour wherever it goes, and moves along a path of glory. The iron and copper and brass, and silver and gold, and, in a word, all other metals included in its composition, are all in a liquid or molten, or possibly even, in a gaseous state. The intensity of the heat will not allow these substances to cool and harden. Even did any man exist, he could not approach within a hundred miles of its surface, without being instantly reduced to a cinder. Even if—to suppose an impossibility — he could endure this heat, compared to which the centre of a brick kiln would be cool and comfortable, he would then be destroyed by the fumes and

scorching gas and fiery vapours, and the agitated molten metals. In fact, it would be far easier to live in the middle of a furnace seven times heated, than to live anywhere upon this earth at that period of its history.

Observe: this is not Scripture, nor theology, nor revelation[1]—it is pure, simple

[1] An anonymous scribe has written to object to this scientific account, as being inconsistent with the teaching of Holy Writ; and he bids me consult Genesis. As his difficulty may be felt by others besides himself, it may be worth while dealing with it here. Let me observe, then, that the supposed discrepancy is wholly imaginary. It rests upon an inaccurate, though a very natural mistranslation. If the Hebrew word "yôm," which has been rendered "day" both in the Catholic and the Protestant versions of the Scriptures, *always* signified a day, *i.e.*, a term of four and twenty hours, marked by the apparent movement of the sun, there would be something in the objection. But its meaning cannot be so restricted, as a little common sense, supplemented by a little knowledge of philology, will make abundantly evident. For, observe: according to Genesis itself, the sun was not made till the *fourth* "Day," so that there are three entire "Days" to be accounted for, before the sun as "the ruler of the day" (Gen. i. 16) came into existence. What, then, was the precise nature of those first three "Days"? Evidently

unadulterated science. Now, to what conclusion does this point? Two facts may clearly be set down. 1st. There was a time when no man existed upon this earth. *Fact number one.* 2nd. Man now does exist and live upon this earth. *Fact number two.* Here are two plain undeniable facts. Now comes the question: how came the FIRST man? We may trace man back from son to father; from father to grandfather, and so on, up to a certain point—

they cannot have been "Days" in our present sense of the term. A Day, such as we conceive it, is impossible without the existence of the sun. There must be a mistake somewhere. This was so evident that the learned set to work to make a more careful study of the word "yôm," so as to arrive at its veritable meaning. By comparing a great number of passages in which it occurs, they have at last discovered that its true meaning is often simply "a period". So that the correct rendering of the passage in Genesis is not "in six days," but "in six periods" God made the heavens and the earth. This true translation knocks the bottom out of the objection, and destroys any real antagonism between the account of Genesis and of Science; for "a period" may be of any duration. *This objection is more fully dealt with in the Appendix, p.* 203.

but not very far. Not to the time when the earth was a ball of liquid fire. Between that period and now, man must have been in some way introduced into the world; but how? Are we to believe, that, as soon as the earth had sufficiently cooled and solidified, man simply "appeared"? That he came from nowhere, and was made by no one?

How can science help me? Science cannot explain. Science is silent. Science hangs down its head. All science can do is humbly to confess — "I don't know." "I cannot explain." The utmost that unaided science can tell me is, that ONCE MAN WAS NOT, AND THAT NOW MAN IS. But as to how he came, or where he sprang from, it can say nothing. Science is dumb. Did the hardened metals or the solid rock give birth to man? Impossible. Did man make himself? Still more impossible. He must first be before he can act at all, and before he can make anything;

how then could he have made himself? Then, who *did* make him? I am forced to use my reason, and my common sense, and both oblige me to believe that some superior and intelligent Power made man, and this Power we call "God".

That once granted, all is clear and reasonable. But until you admit God as the author and originator, you must remain puzzled, befogged, and dissatisfied for ever.

Thus, at the very outset of our investigations we are, I might say, almost in spite of ourselves, constrained to acknowledge and to postulate the existence of God; for, without that, we are confronted with the impossible supposition that, though man undoubtedly began to be, yet that no one made him—in other words, that an effect—and a stupendous and remarkable effect—exists, without any cause whatsoever—which, of all absurd things, is the most absurd.

The absurdity of ascribing his existence

to any but God, becomes more apparent, the more closely we consider his nature and composition. Consider for a moment even his body, which is, after all, the lowest and the most inferior part of him. What a marvellous creation it is! How wondrously put together! how wisely contrived, and how miraculously formed! The parts are innumerable, and yet all are coordinate, and adapted to serve a common end, while each organ fulfils a special function. Though we each possess a body, though we are constantly using it, though it is a part of our very selves, yet even we do not half understand its mechanism and its functions. Not only the first man, but every man that has descended from the first, is a living testimony to the power and wisdom of God.

Contemplate the newly-born babe. Take the child of a day old. How can we explain its existence save by referring it to God? The mother herself knows not

how her child is formed. She is but an instrument in the hand of a greater Power. From her blood is moulded the new creature—from her blood is fashioned, in a manner all divine, the hands and the feet, the heart, the lungs, the brain, the skull, all the various organs of sense, and, in a word, every minute fibre and microscopic cell, and floating blood-corpuscle of the infant form. How is each joint and bone manufactured? How are all so beautifully and so methodically arranged, and so skilfully connected together? What power places the muscles and ligaments and sinews in position? Who constructs the various and complicated organs, whether external or internal? Such are some of the questions that naturally rise to our lips.

Let us select for instance the eye—the eye of the newly-born child. Two distinct conditions must be realised before the eye is so much as possible. First, all its

complicated parts must be made; and, secondly, all these parts must be perfectly adjusted and connected together. The ball of the eye, the pupil, the iris, the retina, the crystalline lens, the veins running through it and supplying it with blood, the muscles to move it, the lachrymary glands, the lashes, the colouring matter, and a great deal more. The eye itself is indeed a manifestation of divine power, wisdom, and love; and yet it is but a single organ of the still more wondrous body. How, then, shall we explain its formation but by an appeal to infinite Wisdom and uncreated Goodness, *i.e.* to God? What a Mind was that which conceived it; what a Power was that which carried out such a conception! Who can look upon a human form without realising that he is looking upon a masterpiece of a great Artist? It is so essentially a work divine that while we admire it, we cannot explain it. It is so

little the work of man, that even the mother of a child knows not all the secrets of its being. And though the body has been studied since the earliest ages, yet some of its most important functions have lain undiscovered till, comparatively speaking, modern times.

The circulation of the blood is an instance in point. What a strange fact it is that this vivifying and life-giving fluid should be perpetually circulating through every limb and organ of the human body from infancy to old age; that the heart, like some wonderful pneumatic pump, should—by virtue of a power that we cannot control—force the blood through vein and artery day by day, and hour by hour, for sixty, seventy, and eighty or more years without intermission! This must always have been the case, from the time of Adam himself; yet it was only discovered in the seventeenth century. For over five thousand years, therefore, this must have

been going on, and yet no one even so much as suspected it. We have so little to do with it that it continues without our will or intention or even knowledge. Through the unconscious babe resting in its mother's arms, through the labourer stretched in deepest sleep in the shadow of some tree, through the philosopher, absorbed in the contemplation of some knotty problem, the blood is circulating and pulsating continually; yet not one of them is even so much as conscious of it.

Or consider another miracle in the order of nature. The mystery of nutrition. A man takes food, and by an extraordinary and gradual process, that food is transformed into his own substance, into his very body and bones. Were it not that we are so accustomed to it, it would assuredly strike us as passing strange, that the self-same food should be so disposed of, as to form such wholly unlike things as bone and muscle, hair and skin, and

blood and nails, tongue and teeth. Yet such is the simple fact.

Take, as an illustration, an infant who lives entirely on milk for two or three years, and wonder at the stupendous miracle of nutrition. "How wonderful that so common and simple a thing as milk should hold in solution all the elements necessary to the composition of an ear, an eye, or a tooth—that this despised substance should be capable of being changed, by commixture with the juices of the body and by exposure to common air in the lungs, into blood—and that from this single fluid should be produced all those diversified and heterogeneous matters which make up the entire body—the brittle bones, the soft and pulpy brain, the hard and horny nails, the silky hair, the flesh, the fat, the skin, everything in fact from the corn on my lord's toe to the down on my lady's cheek—from the sweat on the brow of labour to the dew

on the lip of beauty."[1] The power of assimilation is a standing and permanent miracle in the order of nature, which must impress every man who has a mind to think and a heart to feel, and sense enough to understand all that it implies.

And I call the attention of my readers to these marvels of nature that they may learn more and more the truth of those words of Holy Writ—"The Lord He is God, He made us and not we ourselves". All things speak of Him, all things refer to Him, all things proclaim Him as the Creator of the universe and of everything it contains. They declare His might and His power, they proclaim His wisdom and intelligence, they tell of His mercy and goodness. Now, God not only made us, but, being wise, He must have made us for *some definite end and purpose:* for it is the mark of wisdom never to act without proposing to itself some distinct motive.

[1] Ed. Johnson, surgeon.

He therefore must have had some definite object in view. Further, being good as well as wise, He must have proposed to Himself not only a purpose, but a *good*, *a holy*, and a merciful and benignant purpose. To describe more fully what that purpose was will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

When Mammon-worshippers here and there begin to be God-worshippers, and bipeds-of-prey become men, and there is a Soul felt once more in the huge pulsing elephantine mechanic Animalism of this Earth, it will be again, a blessed Earth.—*T. Carlyle.*

The thoughts and musings contained in our first chapter led us to the following conclusions: firstly, reason itself declares that man must have been created by Almighty God; secondly, God, being infinitely wise, must have proposed to Himself some distinct and definite purpose in creating him; and thirdly, God, being infinitely good, must have proposed to Himself, not only a distinct and definite purpose, but also a good and loving and beneficent purpose.

In the present chapter our endeavour

will be to make this purpose clear and manifest, by the exercise of a little reason. The question, then, which we put to ourselves is simply this: What was God's object when, in the free exercise of supreme power, He called man into being? What, in a word, is the end of our existence? How are we to solve this problem apart from revelation? Well, the most natural way of getting at the purpose for which anything is made, is to carefully study its nature, its qualities, and its special character and composition.

If a man makes a clock, and I wish to find out what purpose it is destined to serve, it is not necessary that the artificer should inform me concerning his intention. Even though I had never seen a clock, I could soon discover its use and destiny. It is enough that I bring my mind to bear upon the peculiarities of its construction and its action. So soon as it is set going, I very soon realise, from my own observa-

tion, that it *must* have been constructed to measure time. Thus, for instance, a careful examination reveals to me that there is a dial, and that there are figures on the dial equidistant from one another. I observe further that there are hands, or indicators, so arranged as to travel from one figure to another at a uniform rate. If, after this cursory examination, I look into the works and familiarise myself with its more complicated machinery, and ascertain how one part acts upon another, I will go on to discover that each wheel and lever used, is introduced solely to give the movement greater precision and accuracy. In this way I can tell at once, that the artist who fashioned it did not intend it to be a weighing machine,—not from anything he has said, but because it is in no way adapted to serve such a purpose. So, again, I am equally satisfied that he did not intend it to be a steam engine, or a musical box,—not, observe,

because of any expressed declaration on the part of the maker, but solely because the *thing itself* is not constructed on those lines, because it is incapable of being utilised for either of such purposes, and because it is wanting in all the conditions we look for in the case of steam engines and musical boxes. This is quite clear as regards objects made by man; but we may follow a similar line of reasoning also, when studying the wondrous creatures made by God, ascending the scale of being, from the lowest to the highest, till at last we are brought to the contemplation of a human being.

Thus, suppose some one were to present us *for the first time in our lives* with, let us say, the body of a bird and the body of a fish. Even though we had never seen such creatures before, we could tell, merely by examining them, that they were not made precisely for one and the same purpose. A glance would inform us that both

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were made to enjoy life, because both are provided with respiratory organs, with a mouth, a throat, a stomach, digestive apparatus, an alimentary canal, and so forth. We would also conclude, and rightly, that they were both destined to see; for otherwise, why should they possess the whole mechanism of sight? And so we would argue concerning each organ in turn. On the other hand, we could tell, with equal certainty, that, though both were destined to move and travel about, they were not destined to move in the *same* medium, or in the same manner. How do we know? Not by revelation—not by any divine illumination, but simply by studying their formation and structure. The bird has large beautiful wings, extending like a fan. When spread out, they cover many times the area occupied by the body; they are extremely light and flexible, and are furnished with strong muscles, which enable them to be moved

with great ease and rapidity. All these facts tell their own tale. They inform us that whoever made the bird, intended it to fly. The fish, on the other hand, possesses no wings—no possible means of supporting itself in the air. Evidently, then, it is not intended to live in the air. Neither is it intended to live on the dry land. Again, how should I know, on the supposition that I had never seen a fish before? Because I perceive it is not provided with any means of terrestrial locomotion. It has no feet to move about on the land. Its fins are too small to enable it to lift its body *above* the ground, and too fragile and delicate and short to be used *upon* the ground. It can neither fly nor run; it is evidently, therefore, made for the only remaining element — water. The manifest intention of its Creator is that it should dwell in the seas, and lakes, and rivers.

We suggest these instances, merely to

enable the reader to realise how it is possible, by merely studying a creature, to ascertain its destiny and purpose.

The same holds good of the study of all the appetites and inclinations observable in the animal creation. If all animals feel thirst, if they experience a craving for water, we naturally inquire how comes that thirst? It must be implanted in them by God. And the plain fact that He has implanted it, is itself an indication that He intends them to drink. Now, if He intends them to drink, we may rightly infer that He will provide them with liquid in some form. So, again, the fact that they experience hunger, is as clear a sign, as a direct revelation would be, that God intends them to eat. If there be hunger, there must certainly be food. Hunger is nature's cry for food; and nature never cries for what has no existence.

Now, let us apply the same process of reasoning to man. Man has, of course, a

great deal in common with the irrational animals. He, like them, is destined, for a time, to live upon the earth; to eat and drink and sleep; to marry, to bring forth young, and to rear a family. All that is perfectly true; but—and this is just the vital and all-important point—in addition to mere animal cravings, he possesses certain qualities and gifts, which are wholly wanting in the brute creation, and to which the brute can never attain. It is precisely by the careful consideration of these qualities, that we are enabled readily to discern the immense—yea, the immeasurable difference, not only between man and brute, as at present constituted—but between the final destiny of man, and the final destiny of the brute. The chief of these qualities are: firstly, intelligence; secondly, free-will; thirdly, rational affection or love. The possession of these stupendous gifts proves, beyond a doubt, that we are made not for creatures, but

for the Creator; not for time, but for eternity; not for earth, but for Heaven. How can mere reason, without Divine revelation, prove so much?

To answer this, we must begin by laying down certain principles. (1) If a creature is sensible of any distinct capacity, or desire, or appetite, it can be only because God has impressed it on his nature. (2) When God impresses a desire or an appetite on any creature, He always supplies an object which corresponds with that desire, and which is capable of satisfying it. That is the second great truth to be borne in mind. (3) The third is that, as soon as the desire or appetite obtains possession of its proper object, it finds itself at rest, and seeks nothing further. For example, a ravenous animal is in pain till it has found food. But when it has eaten its fill, it will lie down and sleep content. It is at peace. Nothing more is required to complete its happiness.

On the other hand, *so long as one's desires remain unsatisfied:* so long as one's longings and aspirations and yearnings receive not their full and perfect gratification, we may be quite sure that their end and purpose have not been reached. But—and this is a very important consideration—if they are such, that *nothing on earth can ever* satisfy them; if they are too great, too deep, too wide, too absorbing, too unspeakable, too measureless ever to be filled and satiated by anything in this world,—then we are constrained to conclude that they are destined, not for this world, but for another, for a future and a more glorious world.

Take man's intellect. It is made for the acquirement of truth. On truth it feeds, on truth it grows and expands and develops. But in spite of this, it is never wholly satisfied. The appetite for knowledge is not like the mere animal appetite for material food. A man may be ever

so hungry: he may be perfectly ravenous. Give him to eat; his hunger departs; he has had enough, he seeks for nothing more. In fact, to give him more would destroy his digestion, and only make him sick. Is it so with the mind hungering after knowledge? No! Quite the opposite. The more a man knows, the more he desires to know; the more extensive and far-reaching is his learning, the more anxious he is to extend it still further. What happens in the case of the intellectual appetite is precisely the reverse of what happens in the case of the physical appetite. The intellectual appetite, instead of diminishing, grows stronger and stronger the more it is fed. What, indeed, is there that we do not wish to know? Is there any limit to our desire? Is there any period in which a man feels that no further knowledge would give him any pleasure? Emphatically not! Then why this thirst, this insatiable thirst for knowledge? Why is it that this thirst is never

slackened? There can be but one answer. Because man is made to possess and enjoy the eternal and uncreated Truth — the source of all truth—God; and therefore all else is, and must be, insufficient. The knowledge of creatures, the partial, incomplete, fragmentary knowledge, that we can acquire here on earth, bears no proportion to the vast capacities of the human mind, made to possess the fulness of truth in heaven. A raindrop is large enough for the pirouetting of an amœba, but it will not suffice for the gambols of a whale.

When a man comes at last to die, how scanty is his sum of knowledge, compared to the sum of truths that exist! He may have grown old among books and dusty folios; yet he is fully aware that there is an infinite number of truths of which he suspects nothing, which yet he would gladly add to his mental store. Even such a learned man as Newton was wont to compare all his vast hoard of

information, to one little shell, thrown up by the limitless ocean of truth. Indeed, the wiser the man the more readily he acknowledges his intellectual insufficiency. Professor Huxley writes: "The known is finite, the unknown is infinite. Intellectually, we stand on an islet in the midst of an illimitable ocean of inexplicability. Our business in every generation is to reclaim a little more land, to add something to the extent and the solidity of our possessions." And the present leader of the Conservative party says: "We live in a small, bright oasis of knowledge, surrounded on all sides by a vast region of impenetrable mystery. From age to age the strenuous labour of successive generations wins a small strip from the desert, and pushes forward the boundary of knowledge." Yet one by one the race passes away, sensible that its hunger after truth can never be appeased in this world. Now, the fact that man is never satisfied with

the mass of knowledge acquired, but always wishes to push his investigations still further, is an infallible sign that his mind was constructed with a depth and a width which creatures cannot fill, but which God alone can fully set at rest. In a word, man is made for that which the world cannot give, for that which the world does not possess; that is, for the infinite and the eternal Truth. This we learn not from the great theologians and religious teachers only, but from the study of man himself. When, indeed, we come to possess God we shall be satisfied, because we shall have attained to the object for which we have been made. "We shall be satisfied," as the Scripture informs us, "when His glory shall appear," but never before.

Or, instead of the desire to know, we may select for our consideration another appetite planted in the human heart, and embedded so deeply and so firmly in its

very centre that nothing can destroy it or uproot it, viz., the desire for happiness. Who is not conscious of it? Who would not be happy? A strong irresistible craving for happiness pulsates and burns in the heart of every man. Yes; he longs to be truly and thoroughly happy; happy without any sadness. The happiness he seeks is a happiness without alloy, without any admixture of misery, without any anxiety, or fear of diminution or loss. So strong is this desire that he is always struggling to gratify it. "To this," as Pascal truly observes, "there is no exception. What different means soever they employ, all tend to this goal. . . . Our will makes no step but towards this object. This is the motive of *every action of every man, even of him who hangs himself.*" Yes; experience and observation prove, that it is happiness which man seeks in every place and in every object. Truly! All seek it, though all do not seek it in the

same way. Some flatter themselves that it is to be found in riches, others in an exalted position, others in the pleasures of the table, or in amusements and dissipation. But, seek wheresoever they will, one thing is quite certain,—no one has ever yet succeeded in finding it, at least not in this world. The world holds out fair promises, but its promises are never fulfilled. It is ever holding out prospects, but they all prove false. We behold some rich, prosperous man of the world, moving in the highest society, living at his ease, eating of the fat and drinking of the strong. We look. We admire. We wonder. We envy. We inwardly exclaim, "How favoured!" "How honoured!" "How happy he must be!" Distance does, indeed, "lend enchantment to the view". But draw closer to him; look into his heart; read his secret thoughts—then you will see that no true happiness is there. Disappointments, mistrust of friends, and

jealousies dog his steps. A thousand disturbing causes interfere with his perfect enjoyment. From afar we imagine riches can supply and satisfy all our heart's desire, but when we come to possess them, they yield but poor satisfaction after all. After we have eaten our fill of the pleasures and honours of the world, we are still hungry, and our souls still empty.

Money cannot cure grief, nor drive away disease, nor can it bring health to the sick, or fairness and beauty to the deformed. It cannot administer to a mind diseased, nor pluck from the heart a rooted sorrow. A gilded coach, and a robe of state, and a whole retinue of liveried servants, will not cure an attack of the colic, nor bring ease to a disordered brain, nor rest even to an aching tooth. Can pleasure, gaieties, dissipation, songs and dances, wine and wassail, make a man truly happy? They may distract the mind for a brief interval, they may divert attention for a while; but

they absolutely fail to fill or to content the heart. Remorse, weariness, and tediousness, even of life itself, often follow from these excesses. We all remember the verdict of the wisest of all men, Solomon. Rich and powerful and of unbounded influence and fame, he gave himself up without reserve to every pleasure; he indulged in every amusement.

"I made me great works. I built me houses and planted vineyards. Whatever my eyes desired I refused them not. . . . I saw in all things vanity and vexation of mind, and that nothing was lasting under the sun." Here is one, wealthy, great, influential, and learned above all men, with endless opportunities of indulging every desire and following every fancy, and who moreover *refused himself nothing* that he desired. Yet—was he content? Was he satisfied? His verdict, uttered in the bitterness of his heart, is "Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity".

It is the same with all who have had the opportunity of putting it to the test. At a distance things look so delightful, so enticing, and so desirable—but they are delusive. Like bubbles that gleam so brightly on the stream, when we touch them they burst and disappear. Look at Napoleon the First. After a dozen successful campaigns, after conquering country after country, and laying half Europe under his feet, was he satisfied? No! His successes merely whetted his appetite for fresh conquests; so that in his insatiable ambition, trying to extend his power yet further, he lost all, and died an exile and a prisoner in a foreign land. Alexander is another example; for when he had conquered the entire known world, so far from being satisfied, he wept. Why? Because there were no more worlds to conquer. The fact is, nothing can fill the void in man's heart. Nothing created can give him lasting rest. Even when the world lays all its treasures

at his feet, and heaps upon him every honour and dignity and privilege, and distinction, and beauty of body and grace of soul, there is something still wanting, something still deficient. Why, oh why is it that the world never will, and never can quiet his restless spirit? Why is it impossible for earthly things to fill up the void in his heart?

The answer is evident, certain and indisputable. Because it is not made for perishable goods, or passing joys. Or, as St. Augustine beautifully expresses it, because *the heart of man was made for God, therefore it can never rest until it rests in Him alone.* WERE IT MADE FOR THE EARTH, THEN EARTH WOULD OF COURSE SATISFY IT. Were it made to enjoy worldly delights and the pleasures of the flesh, then such things, when obtained, would necessarily constitute it in a position of perfect peace. But since they do not satisfy, and never will satisfy it, and never can, under any circumstances,

satisfy it, it must follow, with absolute certainty and strictness of logic, that man was made for something nobler and grander; for a world not made with hands, for a world of peerless and eternal glory. God, being infinitely wise and good, must have adapted man, like all other creatures, to the end for which He created him. God could never have endowed him with faculties, which nothing but the infinite can satiate, if he were not destined to possess the infinite.

All nature, as we contemplate it, confirms and puts the seal of truth on this statement, and impresses it more deeply and indelibly upon our minds.

Man is undoubtedly the noblest and the highest creature dwelling on this earth; and yet, strange to say, he is the most miserable. All admit that he possesses greater gifts and higher qualities than any other visible being; and yet he, and none but he, is sad and lonely, and dejected and

sorrowful. No other creature suffers as much. He alone knows the bitterness of grief, the pangs of unrequited love, the terrors of death, the gnawings of remorse, the horrors of despair. When all other creatures are full of mirth and bound with joy, he alone carries within him a heavy heart. How gaily the fish sport and gambol in the tropical seas, or skim along in the deep sonorous rivers! How merrily, merrily, sing the birds as they fly along o'er field and forest, or cleave the clear mountain air! How peacefully the cattle and sheep graze in the meadows: and how full of sport and joyous frolic is every busy insect, every winged fly, and tuneful beetle! What joy, what pleasure, what calm and sweet content characterise the whole irrational and purely sensitive creation. How comes it that this world satisfies them, yet cannot satisfy us? At first glance it seems strange,—but the reason is obvious. It is, let me repeat, because

they are made for earth, and attain their destiny here; whereas we are made *not* for earth, and do *not* attain our destiny here, but shall attain to it hereafter.

Here, reason and revelation are quite at one. Our end is not yet reached; our destiny is still to come: our home is in another world. If, indeed, this life were all, if there were nothing else to hope for or to expect, when our earthly course is run, then who would not gladly exchange his condition for that of the gaudily-coloured butterfly, fluttering and floating amid the painted glories of sunlit summer flowers; or for that of the careless bee, buzzing so merrily in and out of the scent-laden cups of the tulips and the harebells; or even with the sprightly sparrow, chirping and twittering with its companions among the eaves—or, for the matter of that, with any one among the myriads of irrational beings rejoicing around him? These know nothing of the load of care, labour, and

sorrow that weighs down the heart of man, and threatens sometimes almost to crush it to the ground. "The birds of the air, they labour not, neither do they spin;" yet they are content, because, being created and therefore adapted for an earthly existence, earth is able to supply all their wants. It is only of "man born of a woman" that the Holy Spirit speaks, when He assures us that he "lives but a short time, and that his life is filled with many miseries" (Job xiv.). Yes; leave the haunts of bird and beast; quit the open country, the virginal forest, the sparkling sea, and enter into the habitations of men; then mark the contrast!

Where in the great cities shall we find the cloudless brow, the innocent mirth, the happy, careless look, the universal content and peace for which we sigh? If found at all, it is found as an exception—as gold is sometimes found amid the rough quartz. The characteristics of towns and cities and

all places where men are gathered together, are labour, toil, weariness, fatigue, sorrow, affliction, bereavement, fighting, quarrelling, enmities, jealousies, drunkenness, debauchery, sin in all its most hideous and revolting forms, and the innumerable pains and penalties that sin brings in its train. Wars, bringing death and desolation into thousands of homes, diseases, epidemics, pestilence, famine, carrying off the young and the fair, blighting hopes, wounding hearts, dragging the young wife from her husband's side, separating parents and children, and filling the weeping friends and relatives with bitterness and woe. Oh! how great and measureless is the misery of those, who have no religious convictions to help them! How especially sad and intolerable becomes the lot of those, who know not the Father above who is watching over them, and who suspect not the joys of heaven which would, if they allowed, at last reward their patience and

long-suffering! How many, from sheer want of that faith which brings hope and comfort, and even joy, add yet another sin to their charge, by destroying the life that they feel no longer able to endure!

See the dark muffled figure flitting through the night. On it speeds under cover of the darkness, to the bridge spanning the waters of the Thames. Gaze upon that scared, anxious, troubled look. What a long history of sin and shame and weariness and pain lies stamped deep in every lineament of that poor haggard face! As though pursued by a thousand fiends, she scales the parapet; she gazes down upon the cold rushing waters; she thinks to forget her misfortunes, to still the fever of life; to find at least freedom from pain and disgrace and remorse, beneath the curdling oily waters of the river. Listen! Hark! A plunge—a momentary splash breaks the stillness of the night—and she

has vanished from sight. The earth knows her no more. She was, but is not. The relentless waters meet over her head, and blot out her memory from amongst men.

Alas! alas! Cold comfort indeed. Yet, how common is this tragedy! How many thousands in various parts of the world destroy themselves every year! Sixty thousand, they say, is the yearly average. To find such instances of utter misery, one will search in vain among the annals of animal life. It is a peculiarity of human existence. Human nature affords endless instances, but no really authenticated instances are to be met with among the beasts of the field. Why? Because, unlike the brute, man is made to possess God. Man is made to seek his happiness in God. To seek it elsewhere is to encounter nothing but sorrow, disappointment, vexation, and despair. Nature itself proclaims this truth, as with the trumpet blast of an archangel. Man longs for

happiness—but a happiness without alloy, without end, without any accompanying risk or fear of loss or diminution. Nothing will satisfy him but that. That the feeling is there, all admit; but whence comes it? From nature? True; for that is but another way of saying, "from God". We are what we are, so far as our nature and mental constitution are concerned, by God's creation.

This leads us to another query. Why has God placed that feeling within us? Why has He given us this insatiable thirst? Is it to no purpose? Is it merely that He may thwart it, deny it, disappoint it? That He may mock us, and then laugh at our discomfiture? A thousand times no. To say so would be rank blasphemy; it would be to convert God into a monster. No. If He gives a desire it is that it may be gratified. If it cannot be gratified here, then we are driven to this conclusion: It must be capable of gratification

hereafter—in the home of everlasting peace above. Our home is far away in a distant land; the very sorrow and sadness and sense of weariness which oppress our hearts, are so many proofs that we are now in exile, and in a vale of tears. Oh! how bright and beautiful, how peaceful and how glorious is that eternal kingdom which awaits the faithful servant of God! Well may our hearts grow heavy as we tread the stony and thorn-strewn paths of this life. Well may we repine and lament separated from our own bright home, our Father's dwelling-place, for which we are made. It is a thrice blessed privilege to be created for so high a destiny, but it carries, and must ever carry with it, this consequence: viz., we can never be truly happy so long as we are separated from it. Being made for Heaven, earth will never fill the void; being destined for an uncreated good, *i.e.*, God, the created goods of this world can never

content us, nor set our hearts at rest. As well expect to satisfy the hunger of a giant with the food of an animalcule, or to warm and illuminate the whole earth with a rushlight, instead of the glorious sun.

Hence, instead of depressing or distressing us, the troubles and trials and vexations of *this* life should serve only as a reminder and as an earnest of the glory destined for us in the *next;* they should turn our thoughts to the delights of Heaven for which we are made; and should impress upon us the fact that through many tribulations we are to enter the Kingdom of God. *Sursum corda!*

CHAPTER III.

A FUTURE LIFE.

It must be so: . . . .
Else—whence this pleasing hope, that fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread and inward horror
Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul
Back on itself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the Divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis Heaven itself that points out a hereafter
And intimates Eternity to man.

—*Addison.*

STRANGE thoughts breed strange emotions, and play upon the mirrory surface of the soul, as wanton winds upon a summer sea, now lashing it to madness, now lulling it to a sweet and tranquil sleep.

There is one thought, however, which, more than other, stirs the fathomless depths of man's heart, and sets his wondering spirit thinking and conjecturing;

and that is the thought of immortality. How inexplicable a thing is even *temporal* life! What mystery attends its birth, and enshrouds its first beginnings! How wondrous to wake up, as it were, after an eternal non-existence, and then to find oneself, one knows not how, an integral portion of the Cosmos, a unit in the vast sum of things that be, a wavelet on a boundless ocean, a part of that highest and fairest realm of creation, which is endowed with reason and intelligence!

> Who can tell what the infant thinks?
> Who can follow the gossamer links
> By which the mannikin feels his way
> Out from the shores of the great unknown,
> Blind, and wailing, and alone,
> Into the light of day?
> Unwritten history!
> Unfathomable mystery!

Yet, if life, and thought, and sensation be strange, how far more strange to live for aye! To stand and see all other things go on, develop, and then decay, and fall

in pieces, and still to bear the shock untouched and untroubled. To be a rock immovable, amid the sweeping, turbulent torrent rushing past. To be ever *in* it, yet never *of* it. To witness all things else grow old, yet to know no dissolution!

Nevertheless, such is the condition of all human souls. Not one shall perish. Not one shall cease its life of active thought and volition. The earthy vesture that now encumbers it, and impedes its action, and weighs it to the ground, may be cast off for a period, but the soul itself is numbered with the immortals, and knows not decay nor annihilation.

Skim over the pages of past history, reckon up the sieges, the battles, the storming of cities and of citadels, the slaughter of armies, and the destruction of peoples. Behold! The bones of slaying and slain, of conqueror and conquered, of coward and hero, now mingle in a common grave. Yes, their crumbled

bones, their fleshy garments—but where are *they?* Where are the imperishable *spirits*, the minds that fumed and fretted, that were swayed by anger, greed, and ambition—or moved, perchance, sometimes by gentler and holier motives? Somewhere within the confines of creation they still keep vigil.

Call back to memory the teeming cities of long ago. Count the generations that have come and gone; add up in one gigantic sum the myriads that have eaten and drunk, and loved and hated, and laughed and sung, and bought and sold, and bartered and bargained, and played and prayed, since the dawn of history—those millions upon millions whose voices have echoed through the streets, and whose feet have trod the hard highway, since man first came to be. How dizzy the mind grows in its effort to number this numberless multitude! How it reels and staggers under the awful strain! Yet each member

of that mighty host still exists, and stands out in his own clear individuality, as though he were created but yesterday. His life, and thought, and character and disposition are as clearly marked, as well defined, as strictly personal, as essentially his and not another's, as ever they were. Nay more, each leads even a truer life, an intenser life, and is, if I may so express it, far more fully conscious and alert than he ever was, or could have been, when bound to a corruptible body. How strange that we too, gentle reader, must pass—yet pass we must —from the comparative solitude of earth, with its contemptible twelve or fifteen hundred millions of inhabitants, into that unexplored country, over the bridge of Death, where the unnumbered myriads eternally dwell!

Yet, so it is. For Death is not life's close, but rather its beginning. A dark entry, but issuing into eternal day. It must be so. Not faith alone, but even

reason, does so persistently assert. By a consideration of man's nature and attributes in our second chapter, we came to realise that a future life must needs await him. We saw that God has conferred upon us faculties and capacities that can *never* be satisfied, nor fully exercised on the stage of this world, and that therefore—for God does nothing in vain—they must be destined for another sphere; for a life beyond the tomb. If the intellect were destined for nothing higher than what the earth can provide, the earth would be fully able to delight it; but that we know to be impossible. The same holds good of man's thirst after happiness. In this world the heart is never at rest. Desires, longings, and aspirations after the things that are not, are always distracting, and disturbing and vexing it. It searches after true peace, as a man digs for a treasure; but the labour is vain. It thinks to discover it in wealth, in honours, or in position and influence,

in sensual pleasures, or in the delicacies of the table; yet none of these things can yield any lasting content. "Anthony," says Colton, "sought for happiness in love; Brutus in glory; Cæsar in dominion; the first found disgrace, the second disgust, the last ingratitude, and each destruction." And so of all. Such things are but bubbles that shimmer before the eye, and seem all bright and beautiful, till we extend our hand and seize them. Then they betray their true character, and our fingers enclose nought but a miserable drop of dirty water.

But these are considerations that we dwelt upon and developed in our second chapter; and though they testify, with no uncertain voice, to a life beyond the grave, we shall do well to pass now to other and perhaps stronger arguments, the first of which is to be found in the fact that, go where we will, and seek where we will, and as far back as we will, we invariably find that men have always and

uniformly believed in a state of existence after death. This conviction is so strong and so universal, that we can only conclude, that it is ingrained in man's very nature. Though some few individuals may question it, though an isolated person here and there may court notoriety by denying it, the broad fact remains, that the voice of mankind as a whole proclaims it, and has ever proclaimed it, in most unmistakable terms. Now, this cannot be the effect of any particular climate or surroundings, for it is the same all over the world. Nor can it be accounted for by training or education, since the unlearned and ignorant, no less than scientists and philosophers, are conscious of the same presentiment. It is independent of race and colour, of place and position, of language and traditions, of sex and age. Yea, savages, barbarians, and the lowest of the coloured races, have cherished the same conviction. Now, it stands to reason, that a belief so

universal, so widespread, so independent of position and education, so uninfluenced by differences of culture, antecedents and habits of life and surroundings, must be a veritable instinct of nature, and *as such, cannot mislead or prove false;* for the *Vox Populi* is the *Vox Dei.* Or, to use the words of the poet, Sir J. Davis :—

> If then all men, both good and bad, do teach
> With gen'ral voice, that souls can never die,
> 'Tis not man's flatt'ring gloss, but *Nature's speech*
> Which, like God's oracles, *can never lie.*

It is true, of course, that this belief among savages is accompanied by much that is gross false, and absurd : but, nevertheless, the belief is there. We shall find it, in many cases, thickly incrusted and overlaid by various forms of superstition and by all kinds of erroneous notions ; but, stripped of all these false accretions, the bare fact itself, viz., that death is but a door to a new state of existence, is clearly

found to be impressed on every human mind, and on every human heart.

Even the very Pagans were wont to exclaim, "Non omnis moriar," I shall not wholly die. The ubiquity of this belief is shown by the religious rites and funeral practices of all nations, tribes and peoples, even of the most degraded. When a hero dies, even among the naked savages, the body is often consigned to the ground or to the funeral pyre with elaborate ceremonies. Where it is the custom to bury it in a cave or tomb, various objects are commonly buried with it. Friends will store up rice and bread beside the prostrate forms, thinking that the dead may need such things when they reach "the happy hunting grounds in the land beyond the setting of the sun". Some of the more civilised races will place coins and clothes, and even arms and weapons of various kinds—the lance and spear or the stone-axe and boomerang—within reach of the corpse.

But why? Simply on the supposition that the departed warrior or chief may require such articles, when he awakens from his last deep sleep.

A modern traveller gives an account of a king or South African chief, who wished to despatch a message to one of his favourite warriors, who had fallen in battle, and whose remains had been entombed with the usual fantastic pomp and ceremony. How did he proceed to carry out his wish? He summoned into his dread presence a little naked boy of the tribe, and gave him the message verbally. He then made him repeat it till he was satisfied that the poor child had thoroughly grasped it. Then the powerful savage drew his sword, and with a single well-directed blow, struck off the boy's head, exclaiming, "Go and deliver my message". Now, whatever we may think of the barbarity this indicated, it at least proves that the savage king believed (*a*) that his

warrior still existed somewhere, and, what is more, that (*b*) the boy, whose head he had severed from the trunk, would also continue to live on in another sphere, and might even communicate with others in a similar condition. Such instances might be multiplied. I will give one more, and a really pretty one, from the history of the Seneca Indians. "When a maiden died, they had a custom of imprisoning a young bird until it first began to try its powers of song. Then, loading it with messages and caresses, they loosed its bonds over her grave, in the belief that it would neither fold its wings nor close its eyes, until it had flown to the spirit-land and delivered its precious burden of affection to the loved and lost." Among other peoples, we find indications of the same belief, though manifested in a somewhat different manner.

Thus, in parts of Southern Asia, when a chieftain or prince died, so little did the people doubt the existence of a future

life, that they thought the great man's wives ought assuredly to follow him to his new home, and to follow him indeed without any unseemly delay. Sometimes a prince might possess twenty or thirty or even a hundred wives. How could he possibly be expected to get on without their society in the upper world? Such a notion was not to be entertained for a moment. What, then, happened? The poor wives were put to death,—in fact, burnt in the funeral pyre, together with the corpse of their husband, so that all might reach their future abode about the same time. Indeed, these women generally submitted with willingness, and even cheerfulness, to their fate, so confident were they of exchanging this world for a better—or, at all events, for another.

This was the common practice, especially in India. Such immolations went by the name of "Suttees," the Sanskrit word "satī" signifying an *excellent wife*. In

Bengal alone seven hundred wives have been known to have perished, in this way, in a single year. The practice was stopped in India by Lord Bentinck, the Governor-General, in 1829. Until then, the British Government had tolerated it, provided the wife's death was quite voluntary, and that due notice were given to the public officers, whose duty it was to see that the Suttee was public, and performed in the manner sanctioned, or, at all events, tolerated, by the law.

Another indication of the prevalence of a belief in immortality is to be found in the doctrine of Metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls. Thus, many nations, notably the early Egyptians, held that when a man's body decayed and fell to pieces, his soul not merely survived, but that it passed into some other body —generally the body of a bird or beast, such as a goose or an owl, a sheep or a pig. Hence they would eat no animal

food, lest they should be devouring the dwelling place of some deceased friend or loved companion. If, however, a man were religious and perfect, his soul might be transported to some distant star or glistening sun, and shine down cheerfully and peacefully on its earlier home. Whatever the nature of the body which the soul was thought to inhabit, one thing at least was certain,—it survived the dissolution of its earthly tenement. Isaac D'Israeli informs us, in his *Curiosities of Literature,* that the opinion of Metempsychosis spread into almost *every region of the earth;* and that it continues, even to the present time, in all its force among those nations which have not embraced Christianity. The people of Arracan, Peru, Siam, Cambodia, Tonquin, Cochin-China, Japan, Java, and Ceylon, still entertain that fancy, which also forms the chief article of the Chinese religion. The Druids believed in Transmigration, and

so did the Welsh bards. We likewise learn from Clavigero that the people of Tlascala believed that the souls of persons of rank went, after their death, to inhabit the bodies of beautiful and sweet singing birds, and those of the nobler quadrupeds; while the souls of inferior persons were supposed to pass into weasels, beetles, bugs, and other meaner creatures. Thus, in some form or another, however distorted and misshapen, the idea of a future life lies at the heart of every man, and clings to him throughout every vicissitude and change of fortune.

What is this but the infallible voice of nature proclaiming a profound truth to every man, misread it as he may? There is sound logic in the words of Byron—

> Immortality o'ersweeps
> All pains, all tears, all time, all fears, and peals
> Like the eternal thunder of the deep
> Into my ears this truth, *Thou livest for ever!*

Undoubtedly. A conviction, so firmly

rooted and fixed in human nature, must have been planted there by the Supreme Author and Fashioner of Nature. It must, therefore, point to a profound, momentous, and incontrovertible fact. As Longfellow cheerily sings—

> There is no death. What *seems so* is transition;
> This life of mortal breath
> Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
> Whose portals we call Death.

The day of decease, says Mountford, will be that of our coming of age; and with our last breath we shall become free of the material universe. And in some region of infinity, and from among its splendours, this earth will be looked back upon like a lowly home, and this life of ours be remembered like a short apprenticeship to duty.

> *Mors mortis mori mortem nisi morte Dedisset,*
> *Eternæ vitæ Janua clausa Foret.*

While the gentle reader is "Englishing" these last two lines, I will transcribe the following beautiful passage from the writings of that talented journalist, George

Prentice, which will make a fitting close to our present chapter. "It cannot be," he writes, "that earth is man's only abiding place. It cannot be that our life is but a bubble cast up by the ocean of eternity, to float a moment upon its waves, and sink into nothingness. Else, why these high and glorious aspirations which leap like angels from the temple of our hearts, for ever wandering unsatisfied? Why is it that the rainbow and cloud come over us with a beauty that is not of earth, and then pass off to leave us musing on their loveliness? Why is it that the stars, which hold their festival around the midnight throne, are set above the grasp of our limited faculties, for ever mocking us with their unapproachable glory? And finally, why is it that the bright forms of human beauty are presented to our view and taken away from us, leaving the thousand streams of our affections to flow back in Alpine torrents upon our hearts? We are born

for a higher destiny than earth. There is a realm where the rainbow never fades, where the stars will be spread out before us like the islands that slumber on the ocean, and where the beautiful beings that pass before us like shadows will stay for ever in our presence." The calm assurance of another life, expressed in the foregoing paragraph, may be traced in one form or another in the writings of almost all modern composers. In few, however, has the idea been so elegantly and yet so quaintly put as in the following stanza by Mrs. Barbauld.

On the point of death, she addresses the following touching apostrophe to the "Life" that is just about to leave her :—

> Life ! we've been long together,
> Through pleasant and through cloudy weather.
> 'Tis hard to part when friends are dear,
> Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh or tear ;
> Then steal away, give little warning.
> Choose thine own time ;
> Say not good-night, but *in some brighter clime*
> Bid me good-morning.

CHAPTER IV.

On the whole, as this wondrous planet, Earth, is journeying with its fellows through infinite Space, so are the wondrous destinies embarked on it, journeying through infinite Time, under a higher Guidance than ours.—*T. Carlyle.*

THERE is no question so pregnant with interest to a thoughtful man as the question of a future life. Any change of opinion upon this momentous point, must at once influence the entire complexion of his mind and thoughts.

If, after struggling on in this world for a few fleeting years, I am to be blotted out of existence, and to cease utterly to be, then I am nothing — a mere gleam upon the wave, a mere snowdrop on the river, a mere soulless echo in the wood. Nothing more. But if, on the contrary, I

am to live on and on throughout an endless eternity, to know and to be known, to love and to be loved, to act and to be acted upon, as long as God shall be God, I am then indeed a most noble, as well as a most notable being. How true is the judgment of the saints: *Quod æternum non est, nihil est!* The highest dignity, the most widespread fame, the riches of a Crœsus and the beauty of an Absalom, the wisdom of a Solomon and the dignity of a Cæsar, even if all were united in one individual, and multiplied ten thousand times over, lose all their significance if, after all, they be but the playthings of a day. No degree of wealth, or station, or ability, or influence or fame can be of much solace, if it endure not. Yet such is necessarily the condition of every purely terrestrial thing. All nature and all experience proclaim that—

> The glories of our *mortal* state
> Are *shadows, not substantial things;*

There is no armour against fate;
Death lays his icy hands on kings;
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

It is only the certain knowledge that we shall survive the destruction of all these things, that can secure us true peace, and reconcile us to the labour and trials of our present temporary state. The life of untroubled happiness indeed is not yet, but looms in the distant future. Difficult it is, undoubtedly, for us to imagine such a condition,—a condition in which there will be no more death, no more separations, no more pain, sorrow, disappointment, nor fear; but to say so, is to utter a truism. It is merely to say, what every one knows, viz., that it is difficult to imagine that, of which we have never had any actual experience. Of course. Nevertheless, so far as the natural play of thought and fancy is concerned, it is surely immeasurably easier to

imagine the *continuation* (even in an entirely changed environment) of a life, which we already possess, than to imagine its first beginning. *C'est le premier pas qui coûte.* That my soul, as soon as it has shuffled off its mortal coil, should enter upon a higher and truer and intenser form of life, may be wonderful; nay, undoubtedly it *is* wonderful; but after all, it is well to remember, that it is nothing like so wonderful or so incomprehensible or so impossible to explain, as the certain fact that it began (when it did begin) without any kind of previous existence, and that it arose from out a state of absolute nothingness! It is at that point, that we actually touch mystery.

In fact, in the whole range of scientific investigation, there is nothing involved in such impenetrable darkness and obscurity, as first causes. A modern scientific writer very truly observes: "We can never apprehend the first causes of any phenomena". The force of crystallisation, the force of

gravity and of chemical affinity, remain in themselves, just as incomprehensible to-day, as they were in the first dawn of history. Hence the mere sense of wonder and bewilderment which fills the mind, when striving to draw for itself a picture of that future, which the Holy Spirit assures us, "it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive," is not the slightest argument against its truth. On the other hand, if there be no reason why the soul should cease to exist, on the dissolution of the body, there are a great number of excellent reasons why it should not. Some of these have already received our attention. We will now suggest a few more.

It is a truth which may be inferred, firstly, from the intrinsic nature of the soul itself, which is so constituted that dissolution, as applied to it, is, at least physically speaking, an impossibility.

Let me explain. Everywhere around us

we notice the steady and continuous progress of decay. Buildings crumble to pieces, buttresses give way, walls fall, colours fade, clothes get worn, trees and plants die, birds and beasts perish on land and sea, cities are burnt down, and one generation of men after another moulders in the grave, and returns to dust. The same is true of every material thing. But observe. What we call "decay," and "destruction," and "death" does not involve, in any true sense of the word, real *extinction.* It involves only change. According to the most certain teaching of the most advanced science of the day, nothing in the whole realm of nature is ever really destroyed, in the sense of being annihilated. When we speak of anything as destroyed, or as ceasing to exist, what we really mean is nothing more than that it has altered its condition; in other words, we do not affirm that it *no longer is*, we affirm only that it no longer is *what it was.* It has

become something else. Let me suggest some very simple examples. One morning, on getting up, I notice that a piece of ice is lying on my window-sill. In the evening it has wholly disappeared. Is it absolutely destroyed? No. *As ice*, it has ceased to be. True. But *as water*, it still exists. So, again, a solid lump of sugar lies before me. I let it drop into a tumbler of clear, boiling water. I look into the glass a few minutes later, and all traces of it have disappeared. I cannot see a single particle of the sugar anywhere. Again, I inquire, Is it destroyed? No; for I touch the liquid in the tumbler with the tip of my tongue, and the sweetness that I taste clearly indicates, that the sugar is still there. Hence, it still exists as truly as ever, but in a different condition—in a condition no longer perceptible by my sense of sight. Or we may select another example: a river flows over a great rock. In the course of ages, the

rock is worn entirely away. Can I say, with accuracy, that the rock is absolutely destroyed? Certainly not. It no longer exists *as a rock*, but its minute molecules still exist. The action of the water, as it flows along, has detached atom by atom, so that the rock has at last entirely disappeared, much as a heap of sovereigns would disappear, were every passer-by to carry off one as he hastened along. But that is all.

Take another illustration. A house catches fire. It is burnt to the very ground. Nothing remains but a smouldering ruin. Again we put the question: Is the house really destroyed? Has it ceased to be? My answer is: It no longer exists *as a house;* for a house depends, not upon the mere existence of matter, but upon matter existing in a certain condition, and in a certain relation of parts to parts. But so far as its component elements are concerned, I most emphatically declare

that it does still exist. In fact, I assert, without the slightest hesitation, that no single atom of the house, or of anything in the house, has been crushed or burnt out of existence. The fire has transformed the particles of matter, of which the house was composed, but they still remain within the confines of space, and may all be accurately accounted for. A small portion exists as ashes; a larger portion has been transformed into various gases, now floating in the atmosphere; other portions have gone off as thick black smoke, or been deposited over the neighbourhood in the form of carbon. Look; that big smut that has just settled on my nose, was perhaps a portion of a costly picture, or a bit of a transverse beam, or a fragment from my lady's wardrobe.

It is a well-known fact, recognised by all scientific men, and confirmed by innumerable beautiful and ingenious experiments, that nothing whatsoever that our senses

can take cognisance of, is capable of being really destroyed. "That which is permanent and indestructible in matter," remarks Fiske, "is the ultimate homogeneous atom; and this is probably all that is permanent, since chemists now almost unanimously hold, that so-called elementary molecules are not really simple, but owe their sensible differences to the various groupings of an ultimate atom, which is *alike for all.*" Hence we may redispose, but we cannot destroy. For instance, we may convert ice into water, and water into gas, gas into fire, and so forth, through an endless cycle of transformations.

We may bring about all sorts of chemical changes, and wholly alter the appearance and the properties of things. We may combine, and separate, and mix, and resolve, and play endless tricks with matter, just as a child may build his box of wooden bricks into a thousand different

forms; but there is one thing which not all the powers of earth combined can do, and that is, to drive even one tiny atom out of existence. To annihilate a single contemptible particle of matter exceeds the powers of all men combined! As God alone can create, so God alone can annihilate.[1] No mere natural force can really destroy anything, so that it should wholly cease to be. The changes that may be effected are, of course, very great, and indeed almost endless. In fact, all known forms of force are so correlated, that each will, under certain conditions, occasion the manifestation of any other. Thus, "the rapid chemical union of carbon and oxygen occasions heat, heat begets mechanical movement, this may be so directed as to excite electricity, electricity will produce magnetism; but *in every case*, just so much of the one force disappears

[1] *Vis creandi et annihilandi, soli Deo competit*, says St. Thomas, in common with all other theologians.

as is represented by its equivalent in the new force evoked". This is but an illustration of the well-known law, that THE SUM OF ALL THE ENERGIES IN THE UNIVERSE MUST EVER REMAIN A CONSTANT QUANTITY; in other words, forces may be transformed, but never destroyed.

Now the all-important question we have to put ourselves is: —If we cannot destroy any substance or material object whatsoever, how comes it that we can change their nature, and form, and condition? The answer is plain. We can change the nature and form of any material object, because we can divide and rearrange and variously combine the ultimate molecules, of which they are made up. On the other hand, we cannot *annihilate* any object whatsoever, because we have no power over the ultimate molecules themselves, but only over their arrangement. Hence every form of "destruction," as we call it, consists in reality of a mere redistribution of parts.

A thing is destroyed, *i.e.*, is different now to what it was, say, yesterday; either (*a*) because its parts are differently adjusted, or (*b*) because they have entered into combination with other added parts; or (*c*) because some of its elements have been eliminated. From this we infer the impossibility of changing the nature of any substance, unless, to start with, that substance be composite, *i.e.*, made up of separable parts. Consequently, a *simple* substance, from the very fact of its simplicity, is incapable of destruction. Not being composed, it has no parts to separate, or to form into fresh combinations. To destroy the soul of a single man is not in the power of all Xerxes' hosts. "These may destroy the case of Anaxarchus; himself they cannot reach." Perhaps an illustration will make this clearer. Suppose, then, that I have an enormous cube, made up of a thousand small cubes, I can, by a different arrangement of the thousand small

cubes, produce an almost infinite variety of different figures. But if the big cube is not made up of separable parts — if (*ex hypothesi*) we suppose it to be incapable of division,—then it becomes likewise incapable of assuming any other form.

This illustration will perhaps help us to understand why the soul of man is indestructible. It cannot be destroyed, because it is an indivisible unit. It is, and must be, a simple substance; that is to say, not made up of parts extending beyond parts. You cannot speak of the size or weight or colour of the soul, any more than you can speak of the size or weight or colour of thought, or of an act of judgment, or of an abstract idea. The soul has no extension. There is no right nor left, no top nor bottom, no inside nor outside to a soul. It is a spirit, without any divisions or subdivisions. It cannot be separated into its "ultimate parts," because it has

no parts to be separated, whether "ultimate" or "penultimate". It is a perfectly simple substance.

But observe what follows. Since destruction consists only in some form of disintegration or readjustment of parts; and since science declares that no indivisible element whatsoever is itself capable of annihilation, it follows that the soul, being simple and indivisible, cannot be destroyed; in other words, cannot cease to exist. Or, to express it syllogistically: No destruction is possible without a disintegration of parts. But the soul has no parts: therefore, no destruction of the soul is possible. It is, therefore, by its very nature indestructible. That the soul has not parts is evident from a consideration of the faculties and powers it possesses. If it were made up of distinct parts it would be material; and the very idea of mere matter thinking, and reasoning, and inventing, and composing, and rejoicing, and sorrowing, and sinning and

repenting, and getting angry, and loving and admiring, and hating and envying, etc., etc., is repugnant to common sense. To suppose the soul made up of parts, would be to identify it with the gross substances of the body. It would be to invest mere corporeal atoms with judgment, intelligence, and virtue; it would be to endow them with a sense of such wholly incorporeal and abstract notions as duty, justice, morality, and truth. To insist at length on the simplicity of the soul would be a waste of time, since even the pagan philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, have long since admitted it. Yet, if it be simple and indivisible, then, not merely according to theology, but according to philosophy and science also, it must be indestructible, or, in other terms, immortal.

So far we have contended for the simplicity of the human soul, or its indestructibility *per se:* but many things which are indestructible *per se* are destructible *per*

accidens. Such is the case with the brute soul, and indeed with the "form" of every material thing. No "form" whatever is itself composed. The meanest material form is simple, and is therefore, *per se* indestructible; but, though indestructible *per se*, every substantial form (which is not a pure form), with the single exception of the human soul is destructible *per accidens*, that is to say, they depend for their subsistence in being, upon the material organisation with which they are united. But the human soul offers an exception to this general rule. It is neither destructible *per se*, nor is it destructible *per accidens.* The truth of this is shown in the following manner.

We know no substance whatever immediately. We know substance only by inferences from their operations. Every effect requires a proportionate cause. And, if it be true, in accordance with the scholastic axiom that "as a thing is, so it operates,"

so is it equally true that "as a thing operates, so it is". If then the human soul can exercise operations which transcend matter, it must transcend matter, in its very essence. But the human soul does exercise such operations, as has been shown, therefore, in its very being it transcends matter; in other words it is not dependent upon matter for its persistence in being, and consequently, when the material organisation, of which it is the substantial form, is corrupted and destroyed, the soul still continues in its being, and in the exercise of its higher operations of intellect and will.

What has been said of the human soul cannot be said, at least in the same degree, of the souls of brutes, the "animæ belluinæ" of the schoolmen. Their functions never transcend the limits of the sensible and the concrete. They possess instinct, but not reason, and these two faculties differ as heaven and earth. "If," remarks Pascal, "an animal did by rea-

son what it does by instinct, and if it communicated with its companions by reason, as it now does by instinct, warning them of danger, etc., it would certainly also speak in regard to those things which affect it more strongly; as, for instance, 'Gnaw me this cord which hurts me, and which I cannot reach'." Yet this it never does; evidently, therefore, it has no true reason. Again, it is perfectly clear that a brute can form no ideas of the supersensible and the supernatural; it is not capable of forming to itself any conception of sin, of virtue, of moral worth, of goodness, or of justice, nor can it deduce consequences, or draw conclusions, unless, indeed, in the sense of the Cambridge carrier, referred to by Carlyle, who, when asked whether his horse could "draw inferences," readily replied, "Yes; anything in reason".

Before concluding this chapter, it may perhaps be well to answer, by anticipation,

a possible objection. If, it may be urged, the soul and mind of man are wholly distinct from the body and essentially incorporeal, how comes it that the mind grows weary and fatigued? How is it that when the body is diseased, or sick, or in a trance, or stunned, that the mind is also apparently affected? Can a pure spiritual substance become diseased, or grow sick, or be rendered insensible by a blow?

This difficulty is much more apparent than real, as a little consideration will make clear. Though the soul is a spiritual substance, yet it is connected in a mysterious way with material organs. Consequently, though the soul itself is never weary or tired or diseased, it may seem to be, owing to the failure or the imperfection of the organs, through which alone it can now manifest itself.

An electric light is shining brightly before me. Some one throws a shade over

it. It at once loses its brilliancy, and appears to sicken. Instead of a shade, an opaque metal cover is placed right over it. Now, it will be noticed, that the light seems to have gone wholly out. Yet this is not actually the case. The light remains precisely the same throughout; and the changes, which apparently are fluctuations in its brightness, are nothing more, in reality, than changes in the material coverings, through which its *unchanged* light seeks, with varying success, to approach us.

Or place a man at the organ. He is playing some grand sonata from Beethoven or Chopin. All of a sudden, the music ceases. Must we conclude that the musician has perished, or lost his power of playing? No; it is the blower who has stopped blowing, that is all. In other words, though the musician has his fingers on the key-board, and possesses as much intelligence and talent as ever, there is

no music, because the instrument is no longer in a condition to respond to his touch. In a similar way, the soul cannot show the same quickness of intelligence, and retentiveness of memory, and playfulness of imagination, when its instrument, the brain, is out of order, as when it is acting through a healthy and thoroughly sound instrument. All admit the influence of the body on the soul, just as they admit the influence of the soul on the body; but to do so, is not to identify body and soul. When we say that a sportsman will do more execution with a modern quick-firing breech-loader, than he will with an antiquated blunderbuss, we do not, on that account, identify the man with his fowling piece.

The mind, though absolutely distinct from the body, is disturbed or excited by the mere mechanical impulses of the body. A man becomes stupefied when the circulation of the blood is impeded in the

riscera; he acts more from instinct than reflection. We are told of a literary man who, from long sedentary habits, could not overcome his fits of melancholy till his physician doubled his daily allowance of wine: then his melancholy left him. Perhaps I may take the occasion now afforded me, to remind those of my readers who are enjoying a state of conjugal felicity, that even their domestic happiness may often depend on the state of their biliary and digestive organs, and that the little disturbances of married life may sometimes be more efficaciously cured by the physician than by the moralist; for "a sermon misapplied, will never act as directly as a sharp medicine". But, gentle readers, we may admit all this, and much more to the same effect, yet it in no way proves that the soul is to be confounded with the body, or that the mysterious inhabitant is to be considered as one and the same thing with his habita-

tion. Surely, the shell is not the oyster, is it?

Instead of the soul and its body, take a harper and his harp. Through street and square resound the sweet sounds of his delicious harmony. But, after a time, let us suppose that some accident relaxes the strings; the music flattens, the tone deteriorates. What! Is the harper sick? We wait yet awhile. The strings at last break one after another, till not one remains intact. Is the harper dead? Has he fallen into a swoon? No. It is not he, but his instrument that has at last failed, and worn out, and become useless. So, in a similar way, when the body wears and declines, the mind *seems* to grow feeble, too, till at last the whole framework of man's physical being crumbles and decays. Then the soul can use it no longer, and leaves it, till it be repaired and restored by Him who made it. In Heaven the soul will once more receive

back its harp, restrung and restored, and will play upon it celestial canticles for ever, before the great white Throne of God. "And I heard a voice from Heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder; and the voice which I heard was as the voice of HARPERS, HARPING ON THEIR HARPS" (Apocalypse, xiv. 2).

CHAPTER V.

My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live for evermore;
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is.

—*Tennyson.*

If there be no immortality, J. W. Reynolds very pertinently observes, "human life is constructed on a plan both wasteful and untruthful. It takes more than the half of our life to know the use of it; and we are no sooner at our ripest state, than decay commences. The preparation is not in proportion to the superstructure. Can there be this waste in a world where not an atom perishes? Where all death tends to new life? Where not a smoke-wreath is in vain? We think not."

No; nor anybody else, who has his mind properly attuned, and his heart pure and free. And more depends upon such conditions, than perhaps many of us are willing to admit. A drunken man sees everything distorted; so an evil-minded man, drunk with pride and passion and sensuality, sees all things askew, and altogether fails to interpret the delicate web of subtle influences, which teaches the soul its own high destiny. "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God," says the Holy Spirit. Yes; and in seeing Him, shall see all else that now concerns their true interests; for "in Thy light we shall see light". On the other hand, St. Paul reminds us that "the sensual man perceiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God".

No man can expect to see anything very clearly, especially where nice discrimination is needed, until he first sweeps the cobwebs out of his eyes. The same holds

good with the vision of the soul. If proofs seem obscure, and arguments inconclusive, and reasoning weak, then sweep away sin and defilement; and the mind will soon begin to recover its tone, to clearly apprehend the truth of a future world, and to realise that man is created to live for ever. It was not without reason that the Holy Spirit inspired King David to cry out: "I have had understanding above ancients, and I have understood more than all my teachers". Why? Well, this, ladies and gentlemen, is the reason the infallible Spirit of God inspires him to give:—"*Because I have sought Thy commandments*" (Ps. cxviii.).

There may not appear to be much connection at first glance, between the keeping of God's commandments on the one hand, and spiritual understanding on the other; but let any of my non-believing friends put it to the test, and they will soon come to realise, that a most intimate

connection really does exist. When one sees a house tottering to a fall, one naturally expects to find something wrong with the foundations; so when one notices a man's faith wavering and faltering, one instinctively concludes that it is because his morals have already given way. "You would soon have faith," said Pascal to a dissipated and worldly-minded unbeliever, "if you would leave off your dissipations and pleasures." This statement experience abundantly proves to be true.

But this is a digression. So *revenons à nos moutons.* One of the clearest witnesses to a future life, is found in that strange phenomenon, which we call conscience.

So soon as man comes to the use of reason, he feels himself to be subject to certain laws. Not merely to those laws, under which all other sensitive creatures groan, such as the law of gravity, which chains him to the earth, and hinders him

from flying to some distant planet, or making a voyage of discovery to the hinder part of the moon; not merely to such laws as oblige him to eat and drink, in order to preserve life; and to sleep and rest at stated intervals, as an essential condition of health—to all of which laws he has humbly to submit, in common with the beasts of the field; but to special laws which affect him only,—laws peculiar to man; laws which are indelibly impressed upon his heart and mind, directing him, not simply to what is useful or beneficial to his corporal health, or merely pleasurable and agreeable to his senses, but laws which at once direct him towards what is morally *right*, and warn him away from what is morally *wrong*.

There is scarcely anything so strange, or so essentially characteristic of man, as this phenomenon, which constitutes what we commonly refer to as conscience. How shall we define it? Conscience is the low,

still, soft, articulate voice speaking so clearly and distinctly within our inmost being, and instructing us, as to the moral worth of conduct. It is a judge, which we cannot dislodge, seated upon the throne of our hearts, and pronouncing sentence upon every act we perform, and upon every duty we fulfil, or refuse to fulfil. We cannot control it. We cannot bribe it. We cannot silence it. It is not to be coerced, or persuaded, or cajoled. So independent is it of what we might wish or desire, that one might almost suppose it to be something distinct from our own mind, and wholly external to ourselves. It is indeed a witness, set up by God, to point out, at each succeeding step of our pilgrimage, the way of truth and justice, the way that leads to eternal life. Though we may oppose and resist it and petulantly disobey its injunctions, it still continues to denounce us, and to condemn our evil conduct. "This," it says, "is right," "that is wrong".

"This is commanded;" "that is forbidden". In vain, inclination and self-love may plead; in vain, passion and lust may seek to excuse crime and villainy. It cannot be.

> My conscience hath a thousand sev'ral tongues,
> And every tongue brings in a sev'ral tale,
> And every tale condemns me as a villain.

Even when passion, or greed, or strong provocation so stings and urges us to a dastardly deed, that we at last give way and miserably consent, conscience never ceases to fling its bitter accusations in our teeth. In the very act of murder, or robbery, or sacrilege—even while our guilty hand is actually uplifted to strike, or to steal, or to slay—it clings about our heart, and tells us, in a language we can all understand, that we are doing wrong, and violating the moral law. How faithfully this truth is brought out in words, put by the Bard of Avon into the mouth of one of the murderers of Clarence!

Speaking of his conscience, which is

pricking and harassing him all the while, he breaks out in the following strain: "I will not meddle with it; it makes a man a coward. A man cannot steal, but it accuses him; a man cannot swear, but it checks him; a man cannot [wrong] his neighbour's wife, but it detects him. 'Tis a blushing, shamefaced spirit, that mutinies in a man's bosom; it fills a man full of obstacles. It made me once restore a purse of gold that by chance I found;[1] it beggars any man that keeps it. It is

[1] A very practical instance of the persuasive power of conscience, came under my notice a day or two ago, while skimming over a recent issue of the *Times*, viz.:—"The Secretary of State for India acknowledges the receipt of £1000 *conscience* money from 'Miles,' to be credited to the Government of India. India Office, London, January 15, 1895." To-day (January 17, 1895), I find another instance, viz.:—"The Chancellor of the Exchequer acknowledges the receipt of £14 from A. N. for arrears of income tax". These examples are continually to be met with in the columns of the daily papers, and are good illustrations of the point under consideration. A moral power that can induce a man, unsuspected of embezzling, to give up £1000 to the State, must be something very real indeed.

turned out of all towns and cities for a dangerous thing" (*Richard III.*).

Whence comes this strange monitor? From God. Who has stationed this secret sentinel at the door of our hearts? No other surely, than the Author of our being. And to what purpose, unless He intends to reward obedience, and to punish disobedience? Not here, for we see that in this world the wicked often prosper and the good are oppressed—then, if not here, it must be hereafter. Yes. There must be, if there is any justice in God, a future state, where the good will be recompensed and the wicked punished. There is no law without a sanction. In other words, conscience clearly postulates a life beyond the grave, let the atheist storm as he will.

Consider further, that conscience not merely pronounces on the morality or the immorality of our acts. It also, in some measure, executes sentence. In a word, its approval is so sweet, and so comforting

when we have done right, that the Holy Scriptures compare it to a "continuous feast". On the other hand, any violation of, or total disregard of the dictates of conscience is visited by bitterness and gnawing remorse. "What pain is more unbearable," asks St. Ambrose, "than the interior wound of conscience? Is not this to be more avoided than death, than want, than exile, than the pains of weakness and debility?" (Lib. 3, *Offic.*, cap. 4).

A man commits some horrible crime. Forthwith he feels oppressed with an aching sense of inward guilt. He is ashamed and ill at ease. Why? Is it because he has incurred the enmity of the world? Certainly not. Is it on account of what men may say, or think, or do? No. For even though no one so much as suspects his crime, the same feeling is equally aroused.

> Thou may'st conceal thy sin by cunning art,
> But conscience sits a witness in thy heart;
> Which will disturb thy peace, thy rest undo,
> For it is a witness, judge, and prison too.

Let us suppose the offence to be some secret murder. Not a soul suspects the culprit. Nay; suspicion rests upon another. Perhaps an innocent man is actually executed for the guilty; and the law and public opinion are quite set at rest, and are satisfied that justice has been done. Years roll slowly away. All chances of detection are gone. Still the murderer is haunted by his crime. Still the thought afflicts him, and pursues him wherever he goes. It weighs as a mill-stone about his neck. It oppresses and confounds him. He can rest neither night nor day. He becomes a burden to himself, whilst the thorn is fastened in his flesh. He needs no other accuser than his conscience, which speaks to him even through the inarticulate voices of inanimate nature.

How sublimely has Shakespeare expressed this truth in the words he puts into the mouth of Alonzo, who, in spite of every effort, cannot shake off the

memory of his guilt, but sees accusers starting up upon every side! We can almost see the expression of fear imprinted on the criminal's face, almost hear his trembling breath come and go, as he exclaims with nervous emotion:—

> Methought the billows spoke and told me of it:
> The wind did sing it to me: and the thunder,
> That deep and dreadful organ-pipe, pronounced
> The name of Prosper.

And, as Byron reminds us:—

> No ear can hear, no tongue can tell
> The tortures of that inward hell.

This is no empty imagination. The Scriptures assure us of the same thing, and experience betters the instruction. "There is no peace for the wicked," says the Holy Ghost; and, "The wicked man fleeth when no man pursueth". So again, "The sound of dread is always in his ears; and when there is peace, he always suspecteth treason". In another place we read: "Fear shall terrify him on every

side, and shall entangle his feet"; and, "There is no peace for my bones, because of my sins". All, in greater or lesser measure, are aware of the truth of these avowals. The great poets, in whom we see so faithfully reflected the history and character of mankind, whose special function indeed is "to hold the mirror up to nature," constantly remind us of it.

> Not sharp revenge, nor hell itself can find
> A fiercer torment than a guilty mind,
> Which day and night doth dreadfully accuse,
> Condemns the wretch, and still the charge renews.

Such is the view of Dryden. Shakespeare strikes the same note in the following:—

> Oh! coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!
> The light burns blue. Is it not dead midnight?
> Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.

Upon this subject George Eliot has some sensible and pertinent remarks. "Such terror of the unseen," she writes, "is so far above mere sensual cowardice

that it will annihilate that cowardice; it is the initial *recognition of a moral law* restraining desire, and checks the hard, bold scrutiny of imperfect thought into obligations, which can never be proved to have any sanctity in the absence of feeling." "It is good," sings the old Eumenides, in *Æschylus*, "that fear should sit as the guardian of the soul, forcing it into wisdom; good that men should carry a threatening shadow in their hearts under the full sunshine; else how should they learn to revere the right?"[1] If conscience torments the bad, it brings peace and sweet content to the good. Its approval is as soothing and as strengthening, as its reproaches are bitter and disturbing.

> What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted?
> Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just;
> And he but naked, though locked up in steel,
> Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.

[1] *Romola.*

We meet the same thought in a more modern poet:—

> His strength was as the strength of ten,
> Because his heart was pure.

In other words, because his conscience did not reproach him.

After Cardinal Wolsey's fall and misfortune, it was this same sense of personal innocence that not merely sustained him, but filled his innermost soul with joy.

> "How does your Grace?" [asks Cromwell.
> Wolsey answers:] "Why, well:
> Never so truly happy, my good Cromwell.
> I know myself now; and I feel within me
> *A peace above all earthly dignities,*
> *A still and quiet conscience.*"

It is not the educated and the learned alone who perceive within them this mysterious voice. No. Conscience is not the prerogative of any special class, but is possessed by all. Yet, like other kindred powers, it is no doubt capable of education

and improvement, and so will differ in different persons. Just as the hands of the pianist acquire a greater delicacy of touch by practice, and the ear of the blind, who more than others are constantly depending upon that organ, becomes more sensitive to sound, so conscience when obeyed, listened to, and regularly consulted acquires an extraordinary delicacy. On the other hand, if its dictates are violated, and disregarded, its influence grows weaker and weaker, till at last its voice is almost entirely drowned, amid the roar and bustle of the world, and its vanities, dissipations, and pleasures.

A noise, which is habitually disregarded, will hardly awaken a slumbering man. I have known the firing of a gun on board a ship, after a time, fail to arouse a sleeping officer, though his berth was close by. In a somewhat similar manner a man, by continually closing his heart to the clear, ringing voice of his inward monitor,

may render it by degrees almost inaudible. His state then becomes very hopeless and very awful. But, save in these exceptional cases, conscience speaks to all men, whether learned or ignorant. Here is a striking instance, even in an illiterate African.

A darkey, once visiting his white neighbours, asked for a little tobacco to smoke. One present, who had some loose in his pocket, offered him a handful. A day or two passed away, and the nigger came back and inquired anxiously for the donor, declaring that he had found half a dollar among the tobacco. He was told that, as it had been given to him, he might as well retain possession of it, and not trouble himself about finding the donor. But it was all to no purpose. The poor darkey pointed to his breast, and in broken English said: "In here me hab got a good man and a bad man. De good man, he say to me, 'It is not yours, you must return it

to de owner'. De bad man, he say to me, 'Why! He gave it to you, and now it is your own.' De good man begin again, and he say, 'Dat not right at all; de *tobacco* is yours, but not de *money*'. De bad man say, 'Never mind what de good man speak; you got it; go buy a hot grog; and enjoy yourself'. De good man make reply, 'No, no! You must not do so.' So me much troubled. Me know not what to do. Me very much want to go to sleep, but de good man and de bad man! O! dey kept talking and squabbling all de night through, and disturb me so dat me no sleep. So now I bring de money back, for I feel I can den rest in peace." If that is not a case of disturbed conscience, then will some one kindly tell me what it is?

Were we to turn from profane authors to the study of the lives and writings of the saints, we might produce endless testimonies to the same effect. It was a good consci-

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ence that enabled the heroes of the Church to sustain with an imperturbable calm, all the troubles and trials and contradictions and enmities of an evil world; that infused strength and resolution into confessors and missioners; and that steeled the hearts of thousands of martyrs to undergo torments worse than death. It is, in one word, a good conscience that instils that peace into the soul of man, which Christ promised to all who should serve, obey, and love Him, *i.e.*, the "Pax Christi"—*the peace of Christ.* "Peace I leave with you, *My* peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth, do I give to you" (John xiv. 27). If there be no future life, of what use is conscience? Why hearken to a voice that speaks deceptively? Why fear threats that are idle and empty? Why trouble about laws if there be no punishment for the law-breaker, no merit for the law-keeper? Why regulate conduct, and restrain evil desires, if there be no

absolute measure of right and wrong, no final court of appeal, no sanction for virtue, no punishment of vice?

Don't preach patience, if no future awaits us. Don't point to the duty of hope, if death ends all. Don't speak of justice, if one common fate awaits murderer and murdered, robber and robbed, violator and violated. No; if there be no future life, conscience is a fraud and a mischievous fancy, which we must get rid of with all convenient speed. But if we cannot destroy conscience without first steeping ourselves in villainy and crime, then conscience must be a trustworthy minister of God, and its threats of future punishment true and solemn warnings, and the future state, to which it points, a great and glorious reality.

CHAPTER VI.

MAN'S PHYSICAL NATURE.

Since eternal is at hand,
To swallow time's ambitions,
. . . what avail
High titles, high descent, attainments high,
If unattained our highest?

—*Young.*

PHYSICALLY considered, there is, I suppose, no living creature on earth so weak and fragile, or so piteously helpless, as man. While other animals are born already clothed, with fur or feathers, he creeps out into the world absolutely naked. While other animals enter upon the stage of this life fully armed, and well equipped with weapons of offence and of defence—such as claws and talons, strong tusks

and sharp beaks—man is as defenceless, as the hedgehog would be without his prickly coat, or the oyster, without its protecting shell. Nay more, while the young of other animals can run, or swim, or fly, as well as feed themselves, almost as soon as their eyes are opened, the young of man lie helpless and dependent literally for years. In the struggle for existence, what would be the chances of a naked and unarmed child of six months, if pitted against a tiger, an eagle, or a shark of the same age? Even in the absence of such savage foes, how could he maintain himself in health and vigour, in regions of ice and snow, of driving wind and storm, or even live at all amid the warring of the elements?

It would be impossible but for one thing, viz., reason. Reason is the sole cause of man's superiority. It is, by itself, more than a substitute for fur and feathers, claws and talons, and physical strength

and endurance. It at once puts him in a position to clothe himself even more sumptuously than any other animal, to feed himself with greater luxury, to defend himself with greater success, and to enjoy himself with keener relish.

By the application of human intelligence, even the most untractable forces of nature can be subdued and curbed and turned to account. See how, at his command, iron and steel, compounded into enormous engines, will fly with incredible haste over the land, dragging after them trains packed with men and merchandise. Or steal into the gigantic factories and mills, when the looms are at work, and consider how the gossamer threads of common flax and hemp and cotton may be converted, by mechanical contrivances, into cloth and linen and diaper and other materials. Watch him manipulate the telegraphic wires, and so converse with his cousins living ten or fifteen thousand miles away

—in America or Australia. See him pass over the trackless ocean, and travel in safety into the most distant and unknown regions, guided by that divine messenger, the mariner's compass, steadily pointing out the viewless way. Nor is the experience of one generation lost to the succeeding. Means have been devised to store up in great libraries, the knowledge and science acquired by the whole race, so that we are now able to consult and study the history and development of every people and nation, in their own printed volumes, made accessible to all. And as man has found out the means of nourishing his intellect, in this manner, by laying every nation under contribution, so he has also discovered means of nourishing his ignobler part—the body—on the produce of both hemispheres, covering his dining table with fruits and viands, and luxurious wines, from every quarter of the globe.

He has even entered into partnership with the sun, by whose gratuitous assistance he can now photograph a bird on the wing, a horse at full gallop, or even a flash of lightning, and can throw the most complicated and variated landscape upon his sensitised plates, with far less trouble than it would take to describe the process. Even the living voice of a favourite singer, or of a famous politician or reciter, may be boxed up, and carried about from place to place by means of the phonograph, while his ever-varying expressions and gestures and movements may be reproduced, at will, by means of the still more marvellous kinetoscope.

With a knowledge of the spectroscope he can even send a messenger to the far-off planets, and learn of what strange elements they are composed. He can record, for the information of generations yet unborn, the eclipses and transits and other celestial phenomena of the distant future, such as, for example, that Venus will travel across the

disc of the sun in the year 2004. He can draw the rock substance from the earth, and form it into graceful buildings and architectural fanes, or mould it—with chisel and a scalpel—into a Venus or a Mars, or into forms of birds or beasts, to charm the eyes. Music, sweeter than that of any feathered songster, he can extract from wooden and metal pipes, and move men's hearts to grief or gladness by touches on the catgut cords of harp or viol.

True. All this and vastly more lies within the range of man's God-given faculties ; and other still greater achievements will, no doubt, be reached as years unfold, and "the great world spins for ever, down the ringing grooves of change".

Yet observe. In all this there is no act of real creation or annihilation. Man does but discover, learn, and use the existing forces around him, and apply them to various ends. He alters their form. He combines, divides, readjusts the elements of

which they are composed. Or he hitches on a force to some piece of machinery, and makes it labour and toil for his benefit and advantage. More he cannot do. God has drawn the line of demarcation clear and sharp, between the possible and the impossible in nature. Man may change both the internal and the external arrangements of things, and make of the world almost a plaything, but he is powerless to create or to annihilate anything whatsoever. Call together all your wise men, your noted scientists, your Tyndals, your Huxleys, your Cliffords and Harrisons. Summon the representatives of science and philosophy from every land, and bid them entice as much as one microscopic grain of sand from nothing. They cannot. No; no more than they can create a new solar system. This is a power which belongs to God alone.

And just as they cannot bring anything into existence from nothing, so neither can they force anything out of existence. To

annihilate even an invisible particle of dust is as much beyond the power of man, as to move the earth from its orbit, or to swallow the Atlantic Ocean at a gulp. As the infidel Büchner says: "The ultimate atoms of things are in themselves unchangeable and indestructible; to-day in this, to-morrow in another form, they present, by the variety of their combinations, the innumerable forms in which matter appears to our senses. The number of atoms in any element remains, on the whole, the same; not a single particle is formed anew, nor can it, when formed, disappear from existence." Man may destroy his temporal life, for the simple reason that he is a composite being, consisting of a body and a soul, and of course we can separate these two different substances. Their separation we call death. When separated, we may take the body and destroy that too; for it is made up of innumerable parts, and when these parts are separated the body (*quâ*

body) no more exists, than does a triangle (*quâ* triangle) when I disconnect its sides. As a triangle, it has ceased to be. But the soul? Well, obviously, not being made up of parts, but being a simple and indivisible substance, it cannot be destroyed by any natural agency, as was pointed out in Chapter IV. Nothing can be *annihilated* by any natural cause—it can be destroyed, only in the sense that the elements of which it is made up, may be separated or differently arranged with respect to one another.

The soul is no exception. You can no more annihilate the soul, than you can annihilate anything else. But can you destroy it, in the sense in which other things may be destroyed? No; emphatically not! If you cannot *annihilate* the soul, then you cannot destroy it at all, since there are no parts in it to divide, or to arrange differently. In fact, once it is admitted that the soul is a simple, indivisible, and spiritual substance, then,

even according to the teaching of science, it must be immortal, because indestructible. And every one with power enough to study and analyse the working of his own mind, will soon come to realise, that a thinking, reasoning, judging, and intelligent substance must be simple. I have already referred to this, but I refer to it again, because I wish to point out that, of course, God can annihilate the soul, if He chooses. Whosoever can create can annihilate, and whosoever cannot annihilate cannot create. The two powers are correlative. The question, then, that now so intimately concerns us is, will God exercise His omnipotence to annihilate the souls He has fashioned? For, unless God does so, no other power can. That is quite clear. But will He do so? Most assuredly *not*. Why? For many reasons. First, because He is just; and secondly, because He is good; and thirdly, because He is wise. And this brings us to a

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subject which must often engage the attention of thinking men, and which at the same time presents us with one of the strongest proofs of a future life.

We look around us upon the multitudes of men that have, in the course of past ages, spread themselves over the entire surface of the globe. We read the daily papers, and these bring under our notice the doings and sayings of every nation. We see accounts of crimes, and robberies, and murders, and heartless seductions and desertions. We are often appalled and horrified by the cruelties and injustices committed by man upon man. We notice that but too often, cunning, and craftiness, and unscrupulous greed succeed, where honesty, innocence, and simple faith utterly fail. We see, not unfrequently, the worthless and the worldly sitting in high places, while the good and the self-sacrificing are ground down, or left to hunger and thirst on the king's highway. The brave and

fearless are cut down in battle, while the coward runs away and survives. Some few miscreants may, indeed, receive condign punishment here, but, as has been said, the world's *greatest* criminals are those who never stand in a dock.

So, again; how often does it not happen that the sweater makes a splendid livelihood, while the sweated sinks to poverty and degradation? The wholesale swindler, the dealer in shoddy, the starter of bogus companies, the founder of immoral traffic, the seller of impure literature and indecent pictures, often prosper and enjoy life, and realise a prodigious fortune; while the hard, steady worker, the conscientious honest labourer or tradesman can often barely make ends meet.

Kings quarrel, wars are declared, and armies engage; and, while officers get promotion and sovereigns glory, thousands of innocent men are riddled with bullets, or mowed down by the pitiless sword.

Homes are laid desolate; families are ruined, and bereft of their natural defenders and bread-winners. The widowed mother weeps for her darling boy, whose body has become carrion for the birds; the wife wrings her hands over the bayoneted corpse of her husband; and the lover's heart is broken, as she kisses again and again the cold and clammy lips of her promised bridegroom, now lying prone upon the field of slaughter. Suffering and misfortune and sorrow fill the world; nor are such miseries apportioned out according to man's desert. Neither riches, nor health, nor length of days, are dealt out upon any principle of equity. Pain and sorrow, delights and pleasures are, by no means, adjusted to men's respective guilt or innocence.

We are conscious within our own minds of the injustice that, in a greater or lesser measure, prevails all over the world. Consider the pale, delicate artisans of the loom, "wan and frail as the flax they weave, the

sickly weavers of fine linens, the men poisoned with stifling underground air or scorched with foundry flames, or slowly dying of steel-dust in their lungs, or livid with phosphorus flames, inhaled to get daily bread men who die like so many shoals of netted herrings that the Juggernaut of trade may roll on. Consider these and the many others that the merciless Thor of commercial cupidity crushes under its sledge-hammer, beating gold out of their bruised flesh. Contemplate the myriads who, from birth to the grave, are pent up in factories and sheds and garrets, in gas-glare and crowded alleys and dens of squalid vice, with the whirr of machines ever on their ear and the dead weight of smoke ever in their breath."[1] Contrast these, and such as these, with the gay and giddy votaries of the prosperous world—with those who laugh and chatter and frolic the merry hours away, who flitter

[1] *Chandos.*

like summer butterflies from flower to flower, careless, thoughtless, and indifferent, sucking sweets and honey as they go; not, indeed, really content, for that is impossible, but seeming so, and, by comparison with their more unfortunate sisters, happy *enough*. Who will say that each receives his due? Yet God is just—yea, the infinite and uncreated and absolute Justice. How can this be? Of two alternatives we must choose one.

Either we must join the ranks of the silly Atheist, and say there is no God; or else we must conclude that another sphere of human activity awaits us, beyond the grave, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. We must postulate a future life, where perfect justice shall be measured out to all; where each shall receive with absolute impartiality according to his works; and where compensation shall be made to those who have suffered without cause, and where ven-

geance shall overtake all who have prospered by their iniquity, and profited by their sin. This life, in its present condition, is inconceivable without a future, if we are to preserve any faith in an Infinitely Holy and Just Creator. It were far easier to deny our own existence than to deny the absolute necessity of a future state, where the balance of justice shall be restored.

"If," said Jean Jacques Rousseau, "I had no other proof of the immortality of the soul than the prosperity of the wicked, and the oppression of the just in this world, that alone would be enough to convince me. I would feel constrained to explain such a manifest contradiction, such a terrible exception to the established harmony of the universe. I would be forced to exclaim within myself, 'All cannot end with death. All will be put into proper order and harmony after death.'"

"Do you believe in a future life?" asked a judge at Lyons of one of the priests con-

demned to be executed, during the awful French Revolution. "How is it possible to doubt it," he replied, "seeing what is passing in this unhappy country? If I had begun by being an unbeliever, the scenes that daily meet my eyes, would by this time, have made me a believer (*je serais devenu croyant*)." Nothing so proves the certainty of a future life, as the impunity of the wicked, and the prosperity of the greatest rascals in this. What! Is there to be no punishment for a Henry VIII., no redress for a Thomas More? Is Queen Elizabeth to eternally triumph over the innocent, whose blood she ruthlessly shed? Never! It is clear to every man, who has any faith in Divine Justice, that a day of retribution *must* come, when iniquity shall be brought low, and the cause of justice, purity, and love shall triumph.

If not, then, there is nothing left but to blot the very conception of God out of our minds for ever, and to try and persuade

ourselves, if we can, that the universe made itself; that the marvellous body, and yet more marvellous soul of man, with all its faculties and powers, are the accidental results of the unconscious and fortuitous concourse of atoms; and that all the other unspeakable wonders of heaven and of earth have been ground out by the revolving wheels of blind, unreasoning chance. Verily there are no greater owls living than your so-called Atheists. Even those persons who do pique themselves on being unbelievers, and "glory in their shame," do so only because they fancy it sounds clever, or that it indicates an independent mind. They vaunt of their infidelity in the same spirit as the barber, who informed Voltaire with unfeigned pride and satisfaction: "Je ne suis qu'un pauvre diable de perruquier, mais je ne crois pas en Dieu plus que les autres". May the world be long spared the demoralising and pestiferous presence of such thorough-paced idiots!

May we at least be left in peace, to enjoy that certain and well-founded hope of immortality, which shall never be confounded! I would as lief persuade myself that I live not now, as that I shall not live for ever. If I may be deceived in the first case, I may possibly be also deceived in the last, but not otherwise.

No. Robert Burns does but state a fact when he sings—

> The voice of nature loudly cries,
> And many a message from the skies,
> That *something in us never dies ;*
> That on this frail, uncertain state,
> Hangs matters of *eternal* weight ;
> That future life in worlds unknown,
> Must take its hue from this alone ;
> Whether as heavenly glory bright,
> Or dark as misery's woeful night.

A future existence is not merely a great and fundamental truth, it is also a source of indescribable consolation and happiness. That the gentle reader may form some idea of the sweetness of this remembrance,

in the minds even of learned and distinguished men, I will close this chapter with an extract from a letter of St. Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva, and a Doctor of the Church, addressed to M. Favre :—

"We cannot," he writes, "have any more solid consolation in this life, than that of being assured that it gradually disappears, to make room for that holy eternity which is prepared for us in the abundance of God's mercy. To this eternity our soul aspires incessantly by the continual thoughts its very nature suggests to it, though it cannot have hope for eternity, except by other and higher thoughts which the Author of nature bestows upon it. Truly, I never think of eternity without much sweetness; for, say I, how could my soul extend its thought to this infinity, unless it had some kind of proportion with it? Certainly a faculty which attains an object must have some sort of correspondence with it. But when I find that my desire runs after my

thought upon this same eternity, my joy takes an unparalleled increase, for I know that we never desire anything which is not possible. My desire then assures me that I can have eternity; what remains for me but to hope that I really shall have it? And this is given to me by the knowledge of the infinite goodness of Him, who would not have created a soul capable of thinking of and tending towards eternity, unless He had intended to give the means of attaining it.

CHAPTER VII.

DEATH—THE GATE OF ETERNITY.

To me the thought of death is terrible,
Having such hold on life. To thee it is not
So much even as the lifting of a latch;
Only a step into the open air
Out of a tent already luminous
With light that shines thro' its transparent walls.

THERE are many famous waterfalls in different parts of the world, but it has never been given to me to contemplate such a magnificent and majestic fall as that of the famous Niagara river, which precipitates itself over a hundred and fifty feet of sheer rock, into the whirlpool rapids below, on its way to Lake Ontario. Thousands of persons go to gaze upon this remarkable sight every year. In America the traveller

will constantly hear one globe-trotter demanding of another: "Well, and have you visited Niagara?" One will reply that he saw it "last year"; another, "two or three years ago". This man has just come from it; that one is on his way to it. But, whatever may be the difference in the dates of their respective visits, one and all speak and reason, just as though they were referring to the self-same sight. Now, in sober truth, not a single one of these tourists has seen exactly what the other saw. Each one has had before him a totally different object. Each has, in turn, contemplated an absolutely distinct mass of falling water. This *must* be so; for, since the stream is constantly rushing on, not a particle of the water gazed upon by the traveller in May, is to be seen by the traveller who arrives in June. And so, again, every drop that formed the great fall in June, has disappeared into Lake Ontario long before the end of July.

In fact, there is a constant, ceaseless flow; a perpetual, uninterrupted change. Notwithstanding this, the Fall is always there. It is still to be seen. It still presents the same general appearance; it still bears the same name: and visitors still flock to the celebrated spot as regularly as ever. And what is more, the first and last comer consider they have contemplated the self-same thing.

How are we to account for this? Well; the truth is, that though in this phenomenon there is something transitory, there is also something permanent. The mass of waters is ever departing, and is ever being renewed: but while the waters are fleeting, the solid granite cliff is stable and enduring; the stream runs on, but the rock, which gives the stream its peculiar character, and which is the very essence and foundation of the stupendous phenomenon, is comparatively permanent and lasting. In fact, we see that the cliff and the water

are two distinct and separable things, and perfectly independent of one another, so that even were the waters to vanish, the cliff, which is the *raison d'être* of the cascade, would remain.

The above remarks are here introduced only for the sake of their application to our subject, viz., the immortality of the soul. Man, like the Fall alluded to above, is made up of two totally different and even opposite parts; one part, like the waters of a river, is in a state of continuous fluctuation, the other is immeasurably more stable and changeless than the rock itself. It will be well to exemplify this fact by an illustration.

A strong and robust young man stands before me. He is, let us say, eighteen or twenty years of age. He has the appetite of a wolf, and the digestion of a boa-constrictor; and is, moreover, as plump as a partridge. Yet, his body is in a state of perpetual change; parts of it are ever

decaying and passing away, like the waters of a stream, and must be as constantly renewed. If I dam up or divert the course of a river, the river sinks and contracts, and loses both in volume and velocity. It is precisely the same thing with regard to the body. I cut off from my stout young gentleman his wonted supply of food—in a word, I dam up *his* stream at its source—what happens? His strength fails, his colour fades, his plumpness departs, his flesh shrinks, his eyes retire into their sockets, his cheek-bones protrude. He grows lean and thin and emaciated, till his skin hangs about him "like an old lady's loose gown". He is "withered like an old apple"; in a short space of time, he is no better than a skeleton, or a *memento mori.* Unless food be soon at hand, and the stream replenished, die he must, for the waste continues, and though much is continually going out, nothing is coming in.

The fact is, the human body is always wearing away and decaying; atom after atom, and molecule after molecule, loses its vital property, falls out of the system, and has to be renewed. What is now your eye, or your ear, or your shoulder-blade, or your brain, was, but a short time ago, a beef steak or a mutton chop, a hot potato, or a boiled cabbage; and so, in a short time hence, it will have accomplished its task, and pass off again, either in your breath, or through the pores of your skin, or by some other natural channel, and be lost to you once more. It goes, as it came, and "like the baseless fabric of a vision" leaves not a rack behind.

As a well-known medical writer states: "The mouth is a portal, through which you receive the materials for a new body, and also through which you blow away the worn-out materials of the old. Every time you breathe, you blow away a bit of

your nose, a little bit of your ears, a fragment of your eyes, a particle of your brain, an atom of your heart, a morsel of your shin-bone—in short, a part of your whole body." Now, if this loss were not made good, and the atoms not replaced by others as effectually and as rapidly as they are used up, our bodies would soon vanish into thin air. But they *are* ever being renewed by means of food and drink, and through the action of the air, drawn into the lungs, and so forth. In fact, the whole corporeal substance of our bodies is in a state of continuous flux. The entire physical being that we possess to-day is altogether different to that which we possessed ten or fifteen years ago. "All physiologists agree," writes Dr. Edward Johnson, "that life consists in the constant wasting and reproduction of the body, particle by particle; by a perpetual analysis of the old particles composing our organs, and a perpetual synthesis of

new particles derived from the blood; by a perpetual pulling down of the old materials, and a perpetual replacement of them by new; by perpetual disorganisation, and perpetual reorganisation."

In another place the same surgeon remarks: "Every time your watch ticks, one human being is born and one perishes, in some part or other of the world. But in the human microcosm, in that little insignificant world called 'Man,' every time his watch ticks, there are millions of molecules of the old body dissolved and carried away, and their places supplied by as many millions of new."[1]

Now this process of destruction and reconstruction is going on, in every portion of the human frame, even the most secret and interior; but in some portions the process is so evident as to be easily recognised, and indeed actually witnessed.

Your thumb nail affords a good instance.

[1] *Vide* pp. 299 and 80.

The whole of it, root and branch, is less than an inch in length. How often have you cut it, during the last five years? Let us allow that, once in three months, you pare off the twentieth part of an inch. If that be true, then at the end of the fifth year, it stands to reason that you must have pared it all away. At present, there can exist on your thumb, no single portion of the nail, that decorated it five years ago. The nail you now own, is wholly and essentially different from the original one, the whole of which has been pared away, bit by bit. The same truth holds good of every portion of your body. Then, we may inquire, are you the same person? Can you remember your actions, your feelings, your ambitions, and aspirations, say, ten years ago; and can you rest assured that they were yours, and not another's? Have you—you grey-headed old warrior, with the scar on your face—have you a clear and distinct recollec-

tion of the past? Are you sure that you are the same, who fought against the foes of England, shouldered your musket, and charged the enemy fifty years ago?

And you, you dear old Granny, with your puckered cheeks, your ample wig of iron-grey curls, and your mahogany complexion, can you positively declare, without any doubt, that you are really to be identified with the young, smooth-faced, pink-cheeked damsel, with the flowing golden hair, and beaming eye, and the arch smile, whom the boys used to seek as partner in the village dances, when George IV. was king? Certainly. There can be no doubt about it.

Then how is this identity maintained? What is the *nexus*—the link—between the present and the past? *Matter* it cannot be, for matter flows on. All the material organs, that served me ten years ago, have disappeared, and made room for others. Whatever, therefore, might have been entrusted to *their* keeping, must long since

have vanished together with them. The material of my body to-day, cannot possibly retain any mental impression or image or trace, of what I felt or suffered or thought a quarter of a century ago, since there is no particle of the body of that date left to me. Yet, as a matter of fact, I do recollect, and I do clearly recall my past life and history; and I am absolutely certain, that I am the same person that I was long years ago.

If, then, matter is incapable of accounting for my sense of personal identity throughout so many years, I am constrained to admit the presence of something besides matter. Something which is not matter; which is free from the perpetual changes to which matter is subject; something which is permanent and lasting and ever the same, and identical with itself- in one word, a spiritual substance, my soul. "In point of fact," as Momerie observes, "since the body is perpetually changing, we know by ex-

perience, that the soul is related successively to different instruments of perception."

The fact—and it is as clear a fact as any in nature—that the soul endures while matter changes and wears away, proves that the soul is distinct from and independent of matter.

But, if independent of matter, then not under the laws that govern matter. And when the body corrupts and falls to pieces, there is not the slightest shadow of a proof to be discovered in nature or in science, to show that the soul's existence is jeopardised, or indeed in any way affected. As well say that the cliff over which Niagara thunders and foams in a majestic cloud of vapour, must disappear, so soon as the waters are turned into another channel, or in some manner dammed up.

The more carefully we examine our states of conscience, and the more absolutely convinced we are that we are the same persons that we were years ago, the more

necessary shall we find it to admit the existence of a spiritual substance, which endures and retains within itself the manifold impressions and influences, to which it has been subjected, while living within its house of clay, its earthly habitation, the body.

To make this clearer we will have recourse to a simple illustration. I will transport myself in spirit to Kerne Bridge, spanning the river Wye. Let the portion of the water immediately under the bridge represent the human body, in so far, at least, that it always wears the same general aspect, though the particles composing it are always coming and going. Now suppose, as I watch the flowing waters, my little nephew Francis, stationed at another point high up the stream, throws on the waters a number of large wooden letters at regular intervals. He first throws in an "M," which comes floating down till it passes under the bridge; then an "E" appears; then there comes a

second "E". A minute later I notice a "T". And so a number of letters continue to float past, one after another, until, linking them all together in my mind, I form the sentence, "Meet me at Goodrich, at half-past ten, and order coffee for one, and pistols for two"; or any other request you please. Now, the only reason that I am able to construct this sentence, and to interpret my nephew's request, is because it is one and the same person, *i.e.*, myself, who has seen each letter in turn, from the first even to the last; but if the intelligence resided in the material sheet of water under the bridge, it would be always changing, so that the intelligence that appreciated the value of "M" would be passed and gone, before the two "E's" arrived. And the intelligence that contemplated the letter "T" would know nothing whatever of the "M" or the two "E's" that had preceded it, so that no word could be formed, and no message

could be interpreted. There would be nothing to link one letter to another, so as to form the sentence. Each letter would be isolated, and *because isolated*, could never form a complete sentence, or even a complete word. Similarly, unless there were within every man a changeless and enduring spirit, the ever-varying impressions on his senses, which go to make up the experiences of life, could not in any way outlive the transformation that his material organs are always undergoing. There would be nothing to link them together, into one harmonious and consistent whole.

When travelling in Switzerland, about eight or ten years ago, I saw a man seated at a little round table, opposite a lady. Both were quietly sipping coffee. While I was watching them from the opposite side of the platform, the man suddenly drew something from his pocket, and before I could even guess his intention,

much less stop him, he had fired, and shot the lady right through the head. That was the first murder I had ever actually witnessed, and the only one, and it lives in my memory clearly and vividly to the present day. But, observe, every single particle of the eyes I then possessed, and that witnessed the deed, has given place to another. My ears, that were startled then by the sound of the shot, and of the scuffle and turmoil that ensued, are now entirely changed; nothing remains to me of the materials of the body I then called my own. How is it then that I am able to recall the whole incident so clearly and so vividly? The fact can be explained only on the supposition that my material senses communicated the scene to some interior faculty, capable of retaining the recollection of it, while the minute particles composing the communicating organs, in due course of nature, passed away to give place to others. In

a word, there must be within me a permanent something, which constitutes my real self, and which enables me to feel certain that, in spite of all physical changes and renewals, I am truly the identical individual that I was ten and twenty years ago. This "permanent something" we call the human soul. It is by its very nature distinct from the corruptible body, and subject to totally different laws.

When, therefore, the changing and corrupting flesh can no longer renew itself; when, in a word, the continual progress of decay exceeds the native powers of recuperation, and the physical portions of our being resolve into their primordial elements, the soul, unaffected and uninjured, lives on and enters upon a higher and grander form of life, more in keeping with its new surroundings. It stands "immortal amid ruin," like the soul of Ianthe, described so beautifully by Shelley in the following lines:—

Sudden arose
Ianthe's soul! It stood
All beautiful in naked purity,
The perfect semblance of its bodily frame,
Instinct with inexpressible beauty and grace.
Each stain of earthliness
Had passed away; it reassumed
Its native dignity, and stood
Immortal amid ruin.

We may strengthen our belief in a future life also by considering, that it is an absolutely necessary condition of man's well-being in this. Throughout the whole realm of nature, we find, that the Creator has supplied to every part, all that is requisite for the maintenance of order. (1) Material objects exist in a state of harmony by virtue of material laws. Thus the perfect harmony that exists in the sidereal universe is accounted for by the laws of gravity, and of centrifugal and centripetal motion; (2) the vegetative creation is also ordered by the complex but precise laws of growth, development, propagation, and by its relation to the

air, moisture, and soil on which it depends; (3) the sensitive world, which includes all living and breathing animals, is likewise maintained in its proper condition and state, by laws affecting nutrition and climatical conditions, while it is improved and fostered by such principles as "the struggle for existence," the "survival of the fittest," and by the continual process of adaptation, of each form of animal existence, to its changing environment. In fact, we have but to contemplate nature in any of its multifarious departments, to discover that Infinite Wisdom has surrounded each creature, whether inorganic, organic, or sensitive, with all that is necessary for its orderly well-being, in so far at least, as this does not interfere with the welfare of those creatures, which are above it, and to which it is subordinate. We make this exception, since the laws ruling the individuals of each order, are, of course, overruled again, in so far as is necessary or

advantageous to the harmonious preservation of the different orders of creation amongst themselves. For each department of creation is fashioned to subserve the one above it; the rude and inorganic being made for the organic; the organic for the sensitive, the sensitive (and all below the sensitive) for the rational.

Now, bearing this undeniable and evident fact in mind, we are certainly justified in expecting to find the highest, greatest, and most favoured of all visible beings—viz., man—also provided with every condition necessary for his well-being. In fact, we have every reason to expect, that he will be even more generously and efficiently provided in this respect, than any other lesser creature.

But, of course, the laws which order his state, and induce him to live at peace with his fellows, and which make social and community life possible, must be in conformity with his own rational and higher

nature. In so far as man is *material*, he will be ruled by the laws which govern *all* matter (*e.g.*, law of gravity, of cohesion, of impenetrability, of conductivity); in so far as he is *organic*, he will be ruled by the laws that govern all organic bodies (*e.g.*, law of nutrition, growth, development, self-propagation); and in so far as he is *sensitive*, he will be ruled by the laws that govern all sensitive beings (*e.g.*, laws producing a sense of hunger, thirst, and discomfort), exciting him to actions advantageous to his own preservation and well-being. But this general and universal principle does not forfeit its application, or suddenly stop short, as soon as we ascend above the sensitive. It must be applied with equal rigour to reason and conscience — man's higher nature. These must also be controlled and directed and placed under the influence of laws. But these laws will of course be suitable to the character and condition of that which they rule. A merely

physical law may be applied to a merely physical thing, but not to a spiritual or to an immaterial thing. If the intellect and conscience are not to be exempted from all control; if, on the contrary, they are to be subject to laws, as much as everything else in existence, then it follows that these laws must be suitable to a spiritual nature, *i.e.*, they must be spiritual, invisible, and imperceptible to the physical senses.

Now among the many laws that man's moral and intellectual nature demands, to enable him to live a social and harmonious life with his fellows in this world (without entering upon a consideration of their bearings on the next), the laws affecting his reason and conscience are the most important. Consider the ingrained tendencies of man;—his greed, selfishness, ambition; his hatred, jealousy, and vindictiveness; his desire for pleasure and amusement, and his distaste for work, toil, and the more

arduous demands of duty. How are these tendencies to be overcome, and held within bounds? By what means are the irascible to become gentle and patient; the avaricious, generous; the thief, honest; the drunkard, temperate; the unjust, just? Without some degree of honesty, purity, temperance, and self-denial, society could not hold together nor survive for the space of a single generation.[1]

What are the great checks? What are the powerful motives which enable men, as a whole, to progress, to unite, to work in harmony together, to dwell in peace and unity in vast cities and busy hives of human industry? Is it the police? The executive? The strong hands of the civil law? Well, these possess undoubtedly a considerable influence for good; and, in the case of the irreligious, infidel, and godless section of the community, they are of paramount im-

[1] "Die Leute," says Goethe, "die keine Religion haben, haben keinen Gott, und halten sich an keine Ordnung."

portance. But the infidel section forms but a small fraction of the whole nation. Were all men irreligiously minded, social life would soon cease. Fortunately, the immense majority are still under the influence of religion of some kind. They believe, at all events, in an infinitely powerful and just God, in a future state of rewards and penalties, and in the positive *duty* of exercising self-restraint and practising virtue.

These form the strong, steady, and enduring motives which control the social world, as the laws of gravity and centripetal and centrifugal force control the sidereal world. If some men are found who abuse their free will, and violate all duty, and scoff at all virtue, it is precisely because they have refused to entertain and to occupy their minds with such spiritual motives. A man who has real, solid, and practical faith is armed with a thousand powerful arguments for leading a good and holy life, of which an out and

out infidel knows nothing. And where the arguments for following a certain course are altogether absent, the chances are, that course will not be followed; for man, as a reasonable being, needs a motive, and an adequate motive for whatever he does.

But what follows? Well, if man is so constituted, that certain motives are needed to lead him to a proper exercise of his free will, it is quite evident that there must be a true and solid foundation for these motives. We have seen that God provides every kind of creature, with all that is necessary for the proper discharge of its functions, and for the attainment of its end. If, therefore, God has endowed man, the foremost of all visible creatures, with intellect and free will, He must have provided, at the same time, motives in themselves strong enough and persuasive enough to enable man to follow the path of justice, truth, and honesty, if

only he choose to make a proper use of them. God is not called upon to apply these motives to each individual soul, as He applies the attraction of gravity to each individual atom, because man has free will, and is master of his fate, which the atom is *not.* All that strict justice demands is, that God should provide motives which will be powerful enough, when duly weighed and considered, to lead a man always to choose the right. But these motives man must apply to himself, by the exercise of faith, by earnest thought, and by constant and prayerful meditation. Those who so act, lead holy and pure lives, and are a powerful influence for good in the world.

As there is order in the starry heavens, because every star is under the influence of attraction, so there would be as perfect order on earth, if every man were to place himself under the influence of the attraction of the motives we have specified.

Since, however, man is free, he is able to withdraw himself from such influences, and even to deny their very existence altogether. Such men are sources of disturbance and trouble, and were it not that they are comparatively few in number, the world, bad enough already, would be incomparably worse.

But the very necessity of such motives as religion supplies, especially the belief in an interminable future, and a judgment to come, and a state of justly-apportioned rewards and punishments, proves that those motives are well-founded and reliable. For we cannot imagine free will and reason existing, with such a pressing need implanted in their nature, unless there were something to correspond with and to meet that need. Man feels instinctively that he ought to be sober, truthful, honest, pure, unselfish, etc., etc.; yet he knows, even apart from the teaching of religion, and by a sort of intuition,

that the mere sense of obligation will not, of itself, suffice to keep him on the straight path of duty, if there be no God to love, no hell to fear, no crown of eternal glory to win. His weakness must be helped and sustained by stimulants, in the form of rewards and punishments, and by a lively appreciation of a future judgment, and so forth. And this intuition or instinct is a safe guide, and worth whole libraries of logic. "Where in the plan of nature," asks Reimar, "do we find instincts falsified? Where do we see an instance of a creature instinctively craving a certain kind of food, in a place, where no such food can be found? Are the swallows deceived by their instinct, when they fly away from clouds and storms to seek a warmer country? Do they not actually find a milder climate beyond the sea? When the mayflies and other aquatic insects leave their shells, expand their wings, and soar from the water into the air, do they

not find an atmosphere fitted to sustain them in a new stage of life? Yes.

"The voice of nature does not utter false prophecies. And if this be true with regard to the impulses of physical life, why," he asks, "should it not be true with regard to the superior instincts of the soul?" Evidently, what the rational and moral nature of man clearly and peremptorily demands, must be as certain of actual realisation, as that which is demanded by the mere animal instinct and presentiment of birds and beasts. As Schiller puts it—

Was der Geist verspricht, leistet die Natur;

or, as we would say in English, "What the spirit promises, nature performs".

CHAPTER VIII.

Behold fond man!
See here thy pictured life! Pass some few years.
Thy flowering Spring, thy Summer's ardent strength,
Thy sober Autumn fading into age,
And pale concluding Winter comes at last.
And shuts the scene.

—*Thompson.*

Reason and Revelation is our theme. So far, we have confined ourselves almost entirely to a consideration of what reason has to urge, upon the momentous subject of a future life; it is now time to let Revelation speak.

The special channels of Divine Revelation are—firstly, the Infallible Church; and, secondly, the Holy Scriptures, interpreted by the Infallible Church. The Scriptures, by themselves, are open, unhappily, to any interpretations a man may please to put

upon them, as past history, especially that of the last three hundred years, abundantly testifies. Even Shakespeare, who is recognised by all as the most faithful and powerful delineator of human nature, could appreciate so far back as his own day, the absurd consequences of such an utterly impracticable principle, as private judgment. With fine scorn and derision does he put the question—

> . . . . . In religion,
> What damnèd error? but some sober brow
> Will bless it, and *approve it with a text*,
> Hiding the grossness with fair ornament.

Even the devil himself can quote Scripture for his purpose, as we read in the fourth chapter of St. Matthew, and elsewhere. In fact, the private interpretation of Holy Writ has given birth to the two hundred and fifty, or three hundred, different sects [1] now existing in this country,

[1] See *Whitaker's Almanack* for 1895. On p. 250 he enumerates 274 "Religious Denominations," in England alone.

to say nothing of other lands. This deplorable, but very natural, effect is referred to by Butler in the following lines—

> Religion spawn'd a various rout
> Of petulant, capricious sects,
> The maggots of corrupted texts.

This puts me in mind of an anecdote I once heard, of a certain Methodist clergyman, who had migrated to some foreign land to preach the *pure* Gospel, with the valuable assistance and co-operation of a buxom wife, and ten or fifteen children. Once, while engaged in his missionary enterprise, he came across a rather intelligent native, whose reason, it would seem, was not quite as dark as his skin. He tried to convert this native to Methodism. Now, it so fell out that Sambo had already been won over by the Baptists, and professed that form of religion himself. The consequence was, that when the Methodist was waxing eloquent, Sambo turned upon him, and opened fire in the

following words:—"I see, massa, you quote de Bible; so den you read de Scriptures?" . . . "Yes, Sambo, I do." . . . "Good. Den tell me straight, do you read of John de *Baptist?*" . . . "Certainly I do, Sambo." . . . "Well, but answer me dis: Do you read anywhere of John de *Methodist?*" The clergyman was silent, so Sambo proceeded to press his point well home; "No, massa, you search de whole book thro', and you no find a word about John de Methodist. Your sect of a later date. You am all wrong." The poor clergyman was ill prepared for such an onslaught, and knew not what to reply. The fact is, Sambo had learnt the system of private interpretation too well. And here, he unconsciously, both illustrated its effect, and proved its utter absurdity.

We, my dear readers, as Catholics have always honoured and revered the Bible, as the inspired Word of God—yes, for more

than a thousand years before Protestantism was so much as dreamed of—but we have always understood that, if two of us put a contradictory interpretation on the same passage, we cannot both be right, though we may both possibly be wrong. Consequently, we realise the necessity of an Infallible Church to decide between us, and to safeguard unity and truth.

Now, what is the verdict of Holy Scripture on the existence of a future life? Like so many other doctrines, it is only implied, or stated vaguely in the earlier writings, and increases in clearness of enunciation as time goes on, till it glows in letters of golden light in the New Testament.

Thus as far back as Genesis, a clear distinction is drawn between the body of man and his soul. "God formed man of the slime of the earth" (this refers to the body), "and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul," which signifies his spiritual and nobler

part. This distinction between body and soul, between material and spiritual, is maintained all the way through the Bible, as any one can see, who studies it, especially such parts as the Psalms, Job, and Proverbs, etc.

Again, we cannot listen to such expressions as the following, without realising how firmly the ancient Hebrews believed in a future life. Jacob, on being asked by Pharo, "How many are the days of the years of thy life?" replied, "The days of my *pilgrimage* are a hundred and thirty, few and evil, and they are not come up to the days of the pilgrimage of my fathers" (Gen. xlvii. 9). It would be meaningless to speak of this life as a "pilgrimage" unless it were thought to lead somewhere; unless, in a word, it were the high road to some other form of existence. Again, the old Hebrews were wont to speak of the dead as being "gathered to their fathers," or "united to their people," which certainly

does not convey the idea of annihilation. Further—to select a special incident—it is well known that Saul went to "a woman that had a divining spirit," and asked her to bring up the soul of Samuel, who had been a long time dead and buried, which she did (1 Kings xxviii. 7-15). This is a further testimony of the belief of the ancients. Besides, it is worthy of note that they even had a special name to indicate the abode of the departed, viz., "Sheol". This word occurs seven times in the Pentateuch, and sixty-five times throughout the Old Testament; and in almost all cases it means (so the best Hebrew authorities tell us), not the tomb, but the abode of departed souls.

In Ecclesiastes (xii. 5) we are reminded that "man shall go into the house of his *eternity*," and that "the dust shall return into its earth, from whence it was, and the spirit return to God, Who gave it". "And all things that are done," continues the same writer, "God will bring into

judgment for every error, whether it be good or evil." In Job we find a still more striking profession of belief: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth, and I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God" (xix. 25-26). In Wisdom (iii. 1-4) we are assured that "the souls of the just are in the hands of God. . . . In the sight of the unwise they *seemed* to die, and their departure was taken for misery, and their going away from us for utter destruction, but they are in peace. And though in the sight of men they suffered torments, their hope is full of *immortality*," and much more to the same effect. These and many other passages that might be quoted from the inspired pages of the Old Testament clearly indicate the belief of the chosen people of God. But when we come to the more precise and explicit revelation of the New Testament, we find the same doctrine

enunciated, but in much clearer and more emphatic language. Let us recall some of the more striking expressions, to be met with up and down the Gospels and Epistles.

"Every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My Name's sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, *and shall possess life everlasting*" (Matt. xix. 29). Therefore, a future and everlasting life exists. Again, the same Evangelist informs us that Christ will judge the good and the wicked at the last day, and these, he says, "shall go into *everlasting* punishment; but the just into *everlasting* glory". The same truth is clearly implied in the question addressed by a certain ruler to our Divine Lord: "Master, what shall I do to possess *eternal life?*" Christ did not deny a future existence, but told him how to merit it. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, thus concludes

the sixth chapter: "Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification and *the end*—(not death, or destruction—but) *life everlasting*". In the Apocalypse we read (xx. 10) that "the wicked shall be tormented for ever and ever"; and, on the other hand, that the "good shall rejoice eternally, for God shall wipe away all tears from the eyes; and *death shall be no more*, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow," etc. (xxxi. 4).

Though these texts might be added to almost indefinitely, they are sufficient of themselves to show, how unmistakably the doctrine of a future life is insisted upon and reiterated, in the inspired writings. The Church, which is the "pillar and ground of truth," has accepted the passages in their natural and literal interpretation, and never ceases to remind us of the *endless* joys of heaven on the one hand, and the *interminable* pains of hell on the

other. Her teaching is, as we have seen, in strict accordance with reason and sound sense, and is strongly enforced and strengthened by every appeal to history or science. The precise condition of the good and the bad, in a future state, cannot be nicely determined and defined by reason alone. In fact, the eternal duration of the torments of the reprobate does present a positive difficulty to weak human intelligence; but the general fact of a future state is upheld by history, tradition, the common sense of mankind, and the clearest conclusion of philosophy and science.

And observe this dogma is not, like certain other facts, viz., an isolated truth, standing alone and independently. It is the pivot upon which the whole spiritual life turns. It is so bound up with religion, so woven into the whole fabric of human thought, motive and sympathy, that its destruction would mean the destruction of

all our best-founded and most deeply-rooted convictions. As you cannot remove the mainspring of a musical box without arresting every musical sound, and as you cannot destroy the foundations of a house without bringing the whole building down about your ears, so you cannot give up faith in a future life, without at the same time renouncing faith in all else that is worth believing.

If there is no future life, then there is no justice in God; and if God is not just, then He is not God, and there is no such Being at all in existence. Again, if there be no future, the words of Christ are false, the Incarnation is a fraud, the Sacraments are the silly inventions of men, the Church and its marvellous duration, unity, holiness, and catholicity, are without any adequate explanation; and the only wise are they who make the most out of this world, who live for pleasures, enjoyment, the pampering of

their flesh, and the indulgence of their lusts. If there be no future, no sanction for virtue, no penalty for vice, then nothing would be so reasonable as to throw off all restraints, to give to every evil passion a loose rein, and to make the most of a time, so short, so fleeting, and so uncertain. When there is nothing left to live for, when the orange of life has been sucked to the last drop, then reason might justly countenance self-destruction, and court the total oblivion, that death would be supposed to bring.

Once believe the damnable doctrine of annihilation, once deny a future life, and suicide will become the most rational and sensible course, so soon as the sum total of pain exceeds the sum total of earthly pleasure. Why should any man live on one hour longer than he desires, if there be nothing to follow after death? Why should he endure pain, and sorrow, and toil, and weariness, and poverty, and

hunger, and want, and disease, and decrepitude, and old age, and the frown of the world, the indignities of men, and the scorn and vindictiveness of the oppressor, when he can release himself from them all, and escape them for ever in the total oblivion of the grave? Why should any one of us submit to life, after life has become an agony, when we can end it by a poignard's thrust, or a draught of poison? Why? If there be no future, then, indeed, it were hard, nay, impossible to assign any valid reason. The simple fact is, if immortality were but an idle dream, we should be constrained to reconstruct and rearrange our whole social and moral status. To start with, a clean sweep must be made of all religions, the deepest sentiments of the heart would need expunging; and all our noblest instincts and aspirations would have to be discarded, as possessing no solid foundation in fact.

To deny immortality is to turn sceptic,

and to cast off all that is best and greatest and noblest in nature. It is to confess that man is not only no better than the beast, but infinitely worse.

St. Paul, in his remarkable Epistle to the Corinthians (xv. 19), writes, "If in *this life only* we have hope in Christ, we are, of all men, the most miserable"; but it might be truly added, that we should be more miserable, not merely than all men, but more miserable even than all beasts, for they at least are incapable of realising what death is, and have no kind of knowledge of the extinction that awaits them. Their natural and earthly happiness is not disturbed by the prickings of an uneasy conscience; they are not harassed by gloomy forebodings of a future judgment; they have no experience of the anxieties and cares and responsibilities of human life; nor do they even suspect the thousand and one sources of affliction, disappointment, and sorrow, which spread their sting-

ing waters like an inundation over the human heart, till often it fain would break, and beat no more.

No. The dogma of immortality rests upon too many and too solid arguments to be called into question, and must needs be accepted by all reasonable and prudent men.

It only remains for us now to make a few remarks in conclusion, concerning the nature of that dark entry through which we each must pass, on our way from time to eternity; in other words, we must say something about death.

CHAPTER IX.

Brief brawling Day, with its noisy phantasms, its poor paper-crowns tinsel-gilt, is gone; and divine everlasting Night, with her star-diadems, with her silences and her veracities, is come. What hast thou done, and how?—*T. Carlyle.*

THERE can be nothing half so important in connection with our present life, as our manner of going out of it. Nor is there any point of greater practical and personal interest; for the simple reason that each and every one of us, without exception, will have in turn to submit to the ordeal.

Some persons have a strong and unconquerable dread of casting off their fleshy garment—the body. In their minds, death is connected with all that is terrible, and repugnant, and awful. Yet, it is natural to die; yea, as natural as to be born; and

what is according to nature ought not to be so very, very much dreaded. Death is a consequence of sin. "By sin death entered the world." It is only reasonable, therefore, that it should inspire some fear, and be regarded as a punishment. But a Christian's fear is directed not so much to the act of dying itself, but rather to that which follows after death. The strict investigation and accurate inquiry into his earthly life, the searching gaze of an omniscient and omnipotent Judge, the irrevocable nature of the final decision, and the awful possibility of a reprobate's fate—eternal condemnation! It is these thoughts, and such as these, that breed trouble and stress of mind, and fill the soul of the sinner and the worldling with feelings of fear and anguish.

As to the mere physical act of dying,—well, there is really not much in it. Setting aside exceptional cases, there is very little if any trace of pain. Indeed, it is characterised rather by an absence of pain. Real

and acute suffering is a note of life, not of death. As the body wears, and the senses become numb, the very capacity of pain grows less and less. The soul at last quits the body, not by any violent wrench or agonising effort, but simply because the body becomes too feeble, too disorganised, too wasted away, and incapable, to retain any further hold upon it. It, as it were, escapes as the flame of a candle which has burnt down to the very socket, and goes out, merely because there is no more oil to feed and nourish it.

There is nothing, says Dr. E. Johnson, painful in death from old age. "It makes its advance with a gradual and stealthy step, which is scarcely noted, and the old man drops into the tomb almost insensibly; conscious, indeed, that it cannot be far distant, but still ignorant of the moment when it may open to receive him. By imperceptible degrees the living principle becomes more and more feeble; the heart's

pulsations less and less frequent; the fluids circulate with diminished rapidity; a change is wrought in their quality; they perform their several offices imperfectly; the food is slowly assimilated; we have bone where we ought to have cartilage; we have flaccidity where we ought to find firmness and tension; bones which before were separated now become consolidated; the fluids lubricating the joints are deficient; the ligaments regulating their extent of motion are indurated. Thus, the old man moves with difficulty, and his respiration is hurried and unequal on very slight exertion. The least essential parts of his body forsake him first; his hair becomes white and falls off; the teeth loosen and drop out; his vision becomes impaired and his hearing imperfect, his judgment inaccurate, and his temper querulous. A little while and he becomes perfectly helpless; his brain loses its sensibility; his memory deserts him; already the twilight of death is around him,

and shortly the night of the grave closes over him, and he is no more seen.

"Lastly comes oblivion with her sponge, and wipes his name from off the tablet of human recollection; and the bustling hero of this little drama is heard of, and thought of, and, finally, even dreamed of no more."

Nearly all medical men, but more especially those of wide and varied experience, assure us that death is, in its physical aspect, much more terrible in anticipation than in reality. Indeed, they seem to believe with the great naturalist, Buffon,[1] that it is as easy to die as to be born—as easy to leave this world as to enter it. One of our evening papers recently quoted Dr. Roosevelt as saying that when death is near, its terrors do not seem to be felt by the patient. Unless the imagination is stimulated by the

[1] "La mort est assui naturelle que la vie. L'une et l'autre nous arrivent de la même façon, *sans que nous le sentions, sans que nous puissions nous en apercevoir*" (Buffon, *Hist. de l'homme*).

frightful portrayal of the supposed "pangs of death," or of the sufferings which some believe the soul must endure after dissolution, it is rare indeed that the last days or hours of life are passed in dread. Most sick persons are very, very tired; sleep—long quiet sleep—is what they want. I have seen (says the same authority) many people die. I have never seen one who seemed to fear death, except when it was, or seemed to be, rather far away. Even those who are constantly haunted, while strong and well, with a dread of the end of life, forget their fear when that end is at hand. Most people are unconscious for some hours before they die; and in the rare cases where consciousness is retained unimpaired until a few minutes before the end, the last sensation must be of perfect calm and rest.

Another authority, Leo Grindon, when lecturer at the Royal School of Medicine in Manchester, wrote: "When death is actually about to happen, the fear of it is

in great measure lost. At all events, it is not common, as is well known to those whose professions lead them to the pillows of the dying. This, again, is a vast mercy and providence of God, both to the individual and to the bystanders." Nor are we to attach much importance to the mere external appearances, which often seem to indicate pain and fear, where both are really absent.

Indeed, H. Höffding, in *Outlines of Psychology*, observes that "to conclude terrible sufferings from the convulsions and the death rattle of the dying is a mistake.[1] When death comes slowly the pain is over before the death struggle begins, and the convulsions are often only reflex movements, which take place after the circulation of the

[1] As to the dreaded pangs of death, Buffon says: "Ces terribles agonies effrayent plus les spectateurs qu'elles ne tourmentent le malade; car combien n'en a-t-on pas vu qui, après avoir été a cette dernière extrémité, n'avaient aucun souvenir de ce qui s'était passé, non plus que de ce qu'ils avaient senti!" (*Hist. de l'homme*).

blood is checked and the activity of the brain has ceased." "Nothing," says Grindon, "is more deceptive than the manner in which a person dies, though often so much regarded. The most wicked die 'in peace' as often as the righteous, though it is the peace of torpor in the one case, of piety in the other." Again: "To fancy, as many do, that death is physically painful is quite a mistake, for that would be to look for sensibility in the *loss* of sensibility. Death is a sleep rather than a sensation: a suspension of our faculties, rather than a conflict with them; and instead of a time of suffering, a time of deepening unconsciousness."

This is so interesting a subject, that I will add also the express declaration of Dr. Baillie and Mrs. Jameson. Dr. Baillie tells us that his observations of death-beds incline him to the firm belief that "Nature (by which, of course, he means God) intended we should go out of the world as unconsciously as we came into it". And

Mrs. Jameson observes that "the moment in which the spirit meets death, is probably like that in which it is embraced by sleep. To be conscious of the immediate transition from the waking to the sleeping state never, I suppose, happened to any one." So will it be with our own transition from time to eternity.

"So far as I have observed persons nearing the end of life," writes Dr. O. W. Holmes, "the Roman Catholics understand the business of dying better than Protestants. They have an expert by them, armed with spiritual specifics, in which they, both patient and priestly ministrant, place implicit trust. Confession, the Eucharist, Extreme Unction—these all inspire a confidence which, without this symbolism, is too apt to be wanting in over-sensitive natures. . . . If Cowper had been a good Roman Catholic, instead of having his conscience handled by a Protestant like John Newton, he would not have died

despairing, looking upon himself as a cast-away. I have seen a good many Roman Catholics on their dying beds, and it has always appeared to me that they accepted the inevitable with a composure which showed that their belief, whether or not the best to live by, was a better one to die by, than most of the harder creeds which have replaced it."[1]

When it is remembered that Dr. Holmes belonged to the Emersonian School of Transcendentalists, and that by profession he was a medical man, his testimony is a grand tribute to the power of Christian faith as exemplified in the "*old* Church of Christendom".

My own experience, now extending over many years, is entirely in harmony with the above authorities. To tell the truth, I have always been very much puzzled at the extraordinary calm, peace, and freedom

[1] *Over the Teacups*, by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, p. 250 : 1894 Edit.

from anxiety and fear, that I have often found in the dying, even in those who have not always been models of virtue. And, since it is a subject that has always had a peculiar fascination for me, I have again and again asked other priests to give me their experience, which has never materially differed from my own.

Well do I remember proposing this very fact, as a difficulty to his Eminence the late Cardinal Manning. I was seated one winter's evening in his own room, almost roasted by the huge fire before which he was wont to toast his meagre and wasted form, and chatting upon all kinds of engrossing topics, when he began to refer to his declining strength and advancing years. This turn in the conversation soon gave me the opportunity of putting my difficulty. "How," I asked him, "do you account for the extraordinary circumstance that, when death really comes, people seem to fear it so little? It seems to

me," I continued, "that, however good a man may be, the mere notion of falling into the Great Unknown, of meeting God face to face, and of having one's fate definitely and irrevocably settled for all eternity, ought to cause any one, on the brink of the grave, the most indescribable apprehension and the most acute anguish."

"Well, dear fellow," replied the Cardinal, "the vast majority of persons do undoubtedly die calmly enough; and my explanation is briefly this: So long as God intends a man to live, He wisely infuses into his soul a certain natural dread and horror of death, in order that he may be induced to take ordinary care of himself, and to guard against danger and needless risks. But when God intends a man to die, there is no longer any object for such fear. It can serve no further purpose. What is the result? Well, I take it, that God then simply withdraws

it." The explanation of the Cardinal pleased me well, and seemed not only to account for the strange phenomenon, but to place God in a peculiarly amiable and tender light.

Thus the terror of death recoils before us, and vanishes altogether when death is nigh. We feel more clearly, as years unfold, that it is but a transition from a changing and unsettled condition of existence into a permanent and lasting one – and the actual attainment of the great and glorious end, for which we were created, and which *must* bring happiness of a most supreme and unimagined kind, to all who have "fought the good fight and kept the faith".

> Death is another life. We bow our heads
> At going out, we think, and enter straight
> Another golden chamber of the King's,
> Larger than this and lovelier.

To die well, it behoves us to live well. In order that we may find solid joy, when

our soul is just about to "fold its tent like the Arab, and as silently to steal away," we must live in true friendship and love with the Divine Author of our being, Who holds in His hands the keys of heaven and of hell, and Who will fix our fate for evermore. If we do this, then we may listen with profit to the advice of Rev. Macleod and follow it: –"We picture death as coming to destroy; let us rather picture it as Christ coming to save. We think of death as ending; let us rather think of life as beginning, and that more abundantly. We think of losing; let us think rather of gaining. We think of parting; let us think of meeting. We think of going away; let us think of arriving. And as the voice of Death whispers, 'You must go from earth,' let us hear the voice of God saying, 'You are but coming to Me'."

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

I. *A BIBLICAL DIFFICULTY.*

Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.—*Vergil.*

A LEARNED critic contends, that my account of the earth's early history, is in open conflict with Genesis. Why? Because Genesis declares the earth to have been made in *six days*, whereas science postulates *long ages*, during which the molten orb was gradually losing its fierce heat by radiation into space, and cooling down, to form a fit habitation for man, etc.

Answer.—This difficulty is apparent, not real. It is based entirely, as has already been remarked on page 17, on an erroneous translation of the Hebrew word "yôm".

That Science requires long ages for the formation of the earth, there can be little doubt. According to Sir Charles Lyell, 240,000,000 years have passed since the formation of the indubitably fossiliferous rocks. And to this, he would add many millions, for the formation of the still more ancient *un*fossiliferous rocks. Mr. Charles Darwin claimed more than 300,000,000 years for the tertiary rocks alone; while Professor Haughton thought that the

whole duration of geological time might be represented by about 200,000,000 years. "Three independent estimates by *three of the very highest authorities.*" So far, for the opinion of the Geologists. The Physicists, basing their calculations on other grounds, come to a totally different conclusion. They hold that it is impossible to go much beyond 50,000,000 years. It would be some time later, that water could exist on the earth, and thus no stratified aqueous rocks could be formed, prior to that period.[1] They still refuse to allow even 100,000,000 years, so that we have here, not Science *versus* Scripture, but Science *versus* Science! In other words, we find Physicists contradicting Geologists.

It will be time enough, it might be argued, to get hot over the supposed conflict of Science with Scripture, when scientific men come to some sort of agreement among themselves. But as a matter of fact, there really is no conflict between Geology and the Bible, on this point, for the simple reason that the "Day" of Genesis is not the Day of four and twenty hours, known to us. Listen to the words of Father J. Zahm:—

"As all readers of the Bible are aware, there are many passages in the Old Testament, not to speak of the New, in which the Hebrew word יום, *yôm*—day—signifies *an indeterminate period* of time. Indeed, one may find a striking instance in point, without

[1] *Vide*:—*Owens College Magazine*, March, 1882, p. 55.

going outside the Mosaic narrative of creation. In Genesis ii. 4, we read the words:—'These are the generations of the heaven and the earth, when they were created, in the DAY that the Lord made the heaven and the earth'. Here the word 'day' obviously signifies, not any ordinary day, but *an indefinite period of time*. Again, as Abbé Vigouroux well observes, Moses was *obliged* to employ the word יום, *yôm*—day—to signify period or epoch, as there is no special word in Hebrew to express this idea. This fact, generally unknown, deserves serious consideration. . . . In modern languages we have the word 'day' distinct from the word 'epoch,' whereas, in Hebrew, there is but one expression for these two ideas."[1]

Again, if we consult the *Biblical Thesaurus* by the Right Rev. J. Hellmuth, Principal of Huron College, London, Canada, we shall find the same view confirmed. When not employed in conjunction with, or as contrasted with, the word "night," it often means simply a "period," and may (he says) be translated:—"an indefinite duration of time". Cf.: Gen. vi. 5: Deut. xxxii. 35: Isa. ii. 12: xiii. 6 and 9: xxii. 5: xxxiv. 8: Job xxxviii. 23: etc., etc. When the word recurs at the end of the same verse, the author refers to former explanations, viz., "Time," "Section of Time," "Period".

[1] See *Bible, Science, and Faith*, by Rev. J. Zahm, C.S.C., p. 94, A.D. 1894.

Paul Schanz, professor in the University of Tübingen, makes a similar statement. "Exegetically, *yôm* may mean (*a*) day as opposed to night, or (*b*) day and night together, or (*c*) even time in general" (*vide*:—*A Christian Apology*, vol. i., p. 353. Translated by Glancey and Schobel). But it would be tedious to multiply authorities.

II. *VARIOUS OTHER DIFFICULTIES.*

THE remaining difficulties refer to quite another department of human inquiry, and had best be given in the objectors' own words:—"From physiology," writes a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, whose name I am not at liberty to mention, "we know that amongst other functions, the brain has those of judgment, consciousness, memory, etc."

Answer 1.—To this introductory assertion I will merely observe, that judgment, consciousness, memory, etc., are as much, but no more functions of the brain, than the conception, composition, and writing of this article for the press, are functions of the pen I now hold in my hand. As we are now constituted, the pen is a necessary *condition* for the writing of a letter, and the brain for thinking and judging—but we must not confuse things, nor raise a mere "condition" to the dignity of a "cause".

Then he continues:—"So long as the body remains

in a normal condition, the gradual destruction of its component cells is accompanied by the formation of new ones, which have to carry on the work of their predecessors".

Answer 2.—Undoubtedly; just as the gradual corroding of the steel nib of my pen necessitates the substitution of another, if I wish to continue the work of writing.

Objection.—"With regard to the brain, the cells before wearing out have to impart to their successors those functions which they themselves received, and amongst these we get what we call memory. By this means the cerebrum of to-day receives the *consciousness* of former material changes and sensations, and is able to pass it on, together with its own experiences, to the brain of future time, providing the organ remains normal."

Answer 3.—There is no more thought or consciousness in the cerebrum, or in any other part of the merely physical brain, than there is vision in a microscope, or music in a cornet-à-piston. Of course I cannot (as now constituted) exercise thought or consciousness without the instrument of the brain, any more than I can watch the gambols of an amœba without a magnifying glass, or sound a fanfare without a trumpet; but surely the man and his instrument are not quite one and the same thing! The efficient cause of the fanfare is the musician, whose lips are on the trumpet; the trumpet is merely an indispensable condition. So, in an analogous manner,

the efficient cause of consciousness is the soul—the brain is merely an indispensable condition.

"F.R.C.S.E." then goes on to object: "Pathology confirms what physiology teaches about memory. Take, for instance, the disease known as general paralysis of the insane. In this the patient often fails to recognise his own individuality. One such case will believe that he is a king; another that he possesses unlimited wealth, etc."

Answer 4.—To this I would remark, that there is no failure here to recognise one's identity, which is the only point of interest. The man who believes himself to be a king, still thinks of himself as himself, only in an altered position. He imagines himself—the self he has always known—to be a king. It is not the person, but the position that he persuades himself is changed. It is, in fact, very analogous to what happens in dreams; *e.g.*, I imagine I am wearing a red coat and following the hounds; or I am commanding a ship in a storm at sea, or I am a king holding a grand levée. I may, in my dreams, change my profession or occupation a thousand times, but there is no change of person in any one of these cases; only a change of position. Whether as huntsman, captain, or king, I always recognise myself as the agent. There is no real loss of the sense of personality. Or if there be, it still remains to be proved. But let our critic speak again.

Objection.—"The *post-mortem* examination of the brain shows disease, which will quite account for the

confusion of ideas. We recognise our individuality only so long as our brain permits us. [It would be more accurate to say 'so long as our brain does not *hinder* us'.] We may be prevented doing so either by well-marked disease of that organ, or by the changes brought about by senile decay, therefore, etc."

Answer 5.—The value of the foregoing remarks, so far as they affect my contention, is *nil*. It is like saying of a musician, who had executed a difficult sonata very imperfectly on the organ, that an examination of the instrument was afterwards made. It was then found that many of the pipes had got bent, that the bellows was all in pieces, and that the pedals would not act, which "will account for the confusion" of sounds. But does this dispense altogether with the necessity of a musician? Does it render an intelligent agent superfluous? That is the only important question. A diseased brain will interfere with the harmony of thought, in the case of the soul, for the simple reason that the soul is obliged, in this life, to use that instrument, very much as a rickety and unsound organ will interfere with the harmony of sound, in the case of the organist, for the simple reason that he has to play on it. If you argue, that, because a diseased brain interferes with the clearness of thought, therefore thought is in the brain, in such a sense that no spiritual and thinking agent *distinct from the brain* is necessary; then to be logical, you must also argue, that, because an injured harmonium interferes with the accurate

rendering of the sonata, therefore the power of musical conception, composition and execution is in the instrument, and that no intelligent and musical mind, *distinct from the harmonium*, is necessary—which seems to me less than reasonable.

Objection.—Again, "F.R.C.S.E." resumes the thread: "I tried to apply your reasoning to a case I met with to-day. It happened that I was called upon to administer chloroform for an operation. Before commencing the anæsthetic, I asked the patient questions relating to illnesses he had had many years ago. In thus acknowledging his existence in years gone by, you, Father Vaughan, will say he was proving the presence of his soul, and by the soul he was recognising his individuality. For the moment I allowed this argument, with the idea of seeing how it would work out. After I had been giving the chloroform for two minutes, I addressed the patient by his name, and asked him a simple question in reference to his past history. The response I got was a mumbling of unintelligible words. [Which, allow me to observe, would have been equally the case had the man, with *a perfectly sound brain*, been half asleep. But let us hear on.] Five minutes afterwards he was fully under the influence of the anæsthetic, and to all appearances quite oblivious of his own identity. Now, since he was alive, his soul was present, yet he had no knowledge of his own existence. [How do we know that?] If before I commenced the chloroform, it was his soul that gave him the know-

ledge of past life, then I think it only reasonable to say that when he lost all identity of himself, it must have been because the chloroform had acted upon his soul."

Answer 6.—To my way of thinking, the above line of reasoning is woefully inconclusive. Let me illustrate its fallacy by an analogous case:—It is noon on a summer's day. Now, I find that (*a*) by opening a wooden shutter, my room becomes brilliantly illuminated, and that (*b*) by closing the shutter total darkness ensues. In fact, by controlling the shutter, I can control the light in the room. *Therefore*, the wooden shutter is the whole source and efficient cause of light. And—well! As for the sun, of course it has no existence at all—except in the minds of a few antiquated and superstitious simpletons. No; we cannot explain things that way.

The circumstances described above, are to be accounted for by the chloroform acting upon what, in our present state, is a necessary instrument of thought and reflection, v z., the brain. The soul itself is untouched; but as long as it is united with a material organism, so as to form, what theologians call, *unum suppositum*, it can no more think or reason without a healthy brain, than a pianist can execute a musical score without a piano, or on a piano whose chords are broken. Separate the soul from the brain altogether, and it will think and reason clearly; but while in the "corruptible body, which is a *load upon the soul*" (Wis. ix. 15), its action is dependent on the efficiency

of the instrument, with which it is so intimately bound up.

To employ a similitude. So long as your light (soul) is inside your lantern (body) you must keep the lantern clean, or the light will not shine through —when you release it altogether from the lantern (death) it will shine all the better, and your lantern (body) may be cast aside and buried.—R.I.P. The light of intelligence and of love burns on, even when the body has fallen to corruption.

Objection.—"F.R.C.S.E." then recounts an anecdote, viz.: "For the sake of argument, let us consider a case where there is no question of a soul [Is there no question of a soul here?] brought into dispute. Suppose, ten years ago, a boy was the possessor of a puppy. Circumstances caused the boy to go abroad for ten years." To make a long story short, let me say that my critic then goes on to describe how the dog, now grown old, recognises his master on his return home, comes to him when he whistles, fawns upon him, repeats old tricks, and in a dozen ways seems to remember him. He then concludes: "Now the matter forming that dog's body is not the same as that of ten years ago; yet the dog by his behaviour proves his own identity, and this without the aid of a spiritual substance".

Answer 7.—In reply to this difficulty, which has been proposed in one form or another by five different correspondents, I must first of all point out, that Catholic philosophers do not deny to animals, nor

indeed to plants, a kind of soul, or "simple, unextended, animating principle,"—the "*anima sensitiva*," or "*belluina*," and the "*anima vegetativa*" of the schoolmen—in virtue of which the first are capable of sensation, and the second of organic growth, though their functions prove that this soul must be immeasurably inferior to the soul of man. But it would take far too long to go into that point here. My answer to the objection is, that there is no proof in the foregoing statement that the dog *recognises his own identity* throughout the supposed ten years. Indeed, it is not in any sense a case of recognised identity. It is a case of the "association of ideas". It is urged that the matter forming the dog's body to-day, is not the same as the matter forming it ten years ago. True. But the similar and corresponding particles of which its organs of sense are composed, are acted on by the same external influences (*e.g.*, its master's voice, gesture, look, whistling, etc.), and provoke the same impressions, and these impressions excite the same response, very much as the hand of a musician sweeping over a harp, which has been many times entirely restrung, will evoke the same sounds after a lapse of ten or more years. But in this example my critic entirely misses, if he will allow me to say so, the cardinal point of the whole argument. The whole question turns, *not* upon whether the dog to-day, under the influence of the same *stimuli*, will act as the dog of ten years ago, which I am quite prepared to admit, but—what differs *toto cœlo*—

whether the dog of to-day truly realises, and is intimately self-conscious that he is one and the same creature that played these tricks ten years ago, or even that he existed at all ten years ago. This I most emphatically declare to be without a shadow of proof. If my critic will prove that the dog can identify himself in his own dog-mind, with the dog of ten years ago, his difficulty would be a real one. If he cannot; then he has not so much as touched the outer fringe of my thesis.

Objection.—Another critic, "O. S. F.," writes: "You argue that the recollection of an event that happened ten years ago implies the existence of an immortal soul".

Answer 8.—This is not quite accurately stated. What I did contend was, that it implies an *immaterial* soul, distinct from the body, and not bound by the same laws as the body. Its *immortality* rests upon *other* and much firmer grounds.

He then inquires: "If this be so, how does the argument apply to a brute, say to the dog of Ulysses—

> The dog whom fate had granted to behold
> His lord when twenty tedious years had rolled,
> Takes a last look, and, having seen him, dies—
> So, closed for ever faithful Argus' eyes?

Argus' body was not the same which witnessed the departure of Ulysses from Ithaca, but he remembers him; *ergo*, he has the permanent something we call a soul."

Answer 9.—Of course, the dog has a brute soul,

else indeed it could neither see, nor hear, nor feel, nor taste, etc. But there is nothing to show that the brute soul is immortal,[1] though those who think so are free to hold such a view without incurring any censure. It is a philosophical, not a theological question. What I must again insist on here is that each case must be judged on its own merits. We can study our own nature, we can observe our own minds, we can obtain and systematise the experiences of other men; and the conclusions we are able to arrive at in this way, stand on their own basis, and are not to be upset or called into question, because of difficulties occurring in the brute creation, of which we hardly know anything, and into which we have very difficult and very partial access.

As to the case itself. (1) It is merely the fancy of a poet. There is no proof to show that the incident ever took place. (2) Supposing it did; I would explain it on the principle of the association of ideas. Suppose ten years ago I have beaten a dog very severely. What happens? Two things become associated in the brute-soul of the dog, viz., my general appearance on the one hand, and the pain I inflicted on the other hand. These two form, as it were, two objects in the same picture. Consequently, if one of these objects is brought before the senses of the dog, it will naturally suggest the other. If after

[1] Consult *Summa* of St. Thomas:—22, q. 164, I. ad 2. "Animæ brutorum desinunt esse, corpore corrupto."

some years the sight of my form and face and expression comes before the animal, that sight will excite the corresponding idea of pain, which is so intimately associated with it; and the dog will show fear. This, I take it, is what really happens. But assuredly, it is a long and a difficult passage from that, to the assertion that the dog can do, what a beaten child can do, viz., (1) recall the clear fact that ten years ago a whipping was administered, and (2) be intimately conscious that he was the actual sufferer, the self-same person who howled for pain, and ran away to hide his head in his mother's lap.

Objection.—"F.R.C.S.E." concluded his letter with the remark: "Physiology, I consider, proves beyond doubt that by *matter alone* (*!!*) we can show our individuality".

Answer 10.—Matter alone can neither see, nor hear, nor feel, nor exercise consciousness at all; much less can it connect the past with the present, or preserve throughout the passing years, the conviction of personal identity. If "matter alone" were capable of all that, not only would spontaneous generation—which the highest and most advanced science now pronounces to be impossible—be simple and easy, but with a little ingenuity, chemists might construct a thinking and reflecting machine in their laboratories, to work out their problems for them—this would save them trouble, and might enable them to arrive at more reasonable conclusions. Let us hope so. *Fiat!*

We may, as a fitting conclusion, console ourselves with the thought, so well expressed by Alexander Pope:—

> All nature is but art; unknown to thee.
> All chance, direction; which thou can'st not see.
> All discord, harmony; not understood;
> All partial evil, universal good;
> And spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
> One truth is clear:—
>
> WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.

IN THE PRESS.

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[P.T.O.

Thoughts for All Times.

Jesus Christ was not content to die, and then to depart from our midst for ever. "I will not leave you orphans" (John xiv. 18). Quite the contrary. He would be more than ever with us after His crucifixion. He would multiply His corporal presence almost indefinitely. Before that awful immolation upon the cross, He was, as man, in but one place in all the earth. Now, on the contrary, He deigns to dwell in every town and city and hamlet. In the vast metropolis; in the busy hives of industry; in the quiet country village; and in the humblest and remotest places of earth, He holds His court, and receives His friends. Wherever there are gathered together a few devout worshippers and a priest to administer to them, there too He is found in their midst. It is the same all over the world. As the express train, panting and throbbing under its hidden fires, hurries us along through France and Germany, Switzerland and the Tyrol, and we snatch hasty glimpses of a Catholic church tower or a cathedral spire, we know that He is there. When tarrying in foreign lands, how often the silvery notes of the Mass or Vesper Bells, resounding through some sequestered valley, or across the waters of some slumbering lake or inland sea, stealing upon our ears, arrest our wandering thoughts, and lead us to muse on the love that has led God to dwell among His chosen ones in every nation.

What belated traveller in far-off climes, wending his tortuous way between rocky heights and mountain ranges, has not, while gazing as it seemed almost into the very clouds, beheld the precipitous walls of a convent or monastery, perched upon the summit of some beetling eminence, or clinging like an eagle's nest to the crags and projections

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